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YOUR DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO VICTORIA'S TOP BUILDERS & BUILDING PRODUCTS

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HOMES

BE INSPIRED BY

THE HIA-CSR AWARD WINNERS

SPOTLIGHT ON
VICTORIA'S EAST

HOW TO:

CREATE THE PERFECT FLOORPLAN

EXPERT ADVICE

- KEITH 'THE BLOCKINATOR'
- CHARLIE ALBONE

INSIDE

- KNOCK DOWN AND REBUILD ● CUSTOM-BUILT HOMES ● UNIT DEVELOPMENTS
- KIT, MODULAR AND MANUFACTURED ● PROJECT AND DISPLAY
- UNIQUE BUILDING PRODUCTS

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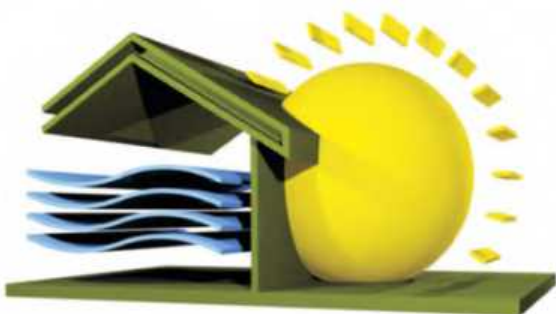
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FROM THE EDITOR



Someone once told me that failing to plan is planning to fail, and when applied to building your home it could not ring more true. Working out the nuts and bolts, so to speak, of your new home is essential in achieving your vision, so this issue we give you all the planning tips you need to help get you off to a great start.

Deciding what you want out of your new home is the first step as it will decide your floorplan, interior and exterior design. We speak to builder Graeme Alexander and Building Designer Darren Evans in our *Designed for you* feature about how to create the perfect floorplan for your lifestyle (p. 30).

If your living situation has changed, you may consider a knock down and rebuild project as this will allow you to stay in a suburb you love, but create a home tailored specifically for you. Keith "The Blockinator" speaks to us about his own knock down and rebuild project and reveals how to avoid falling into common traps (p. 38).

Cohesion between all aspects of your home will make it stand out for all the right reasons. Matching your landscaping to your architecture is one such way to achieve this. Landscape gardener on The LifeStyle Channel's hit show, *Selling Houses Australia*, Charlie Albone, explores how to seamlessly blend your exterior with the rest of your home without blowing the budget (p. 48).

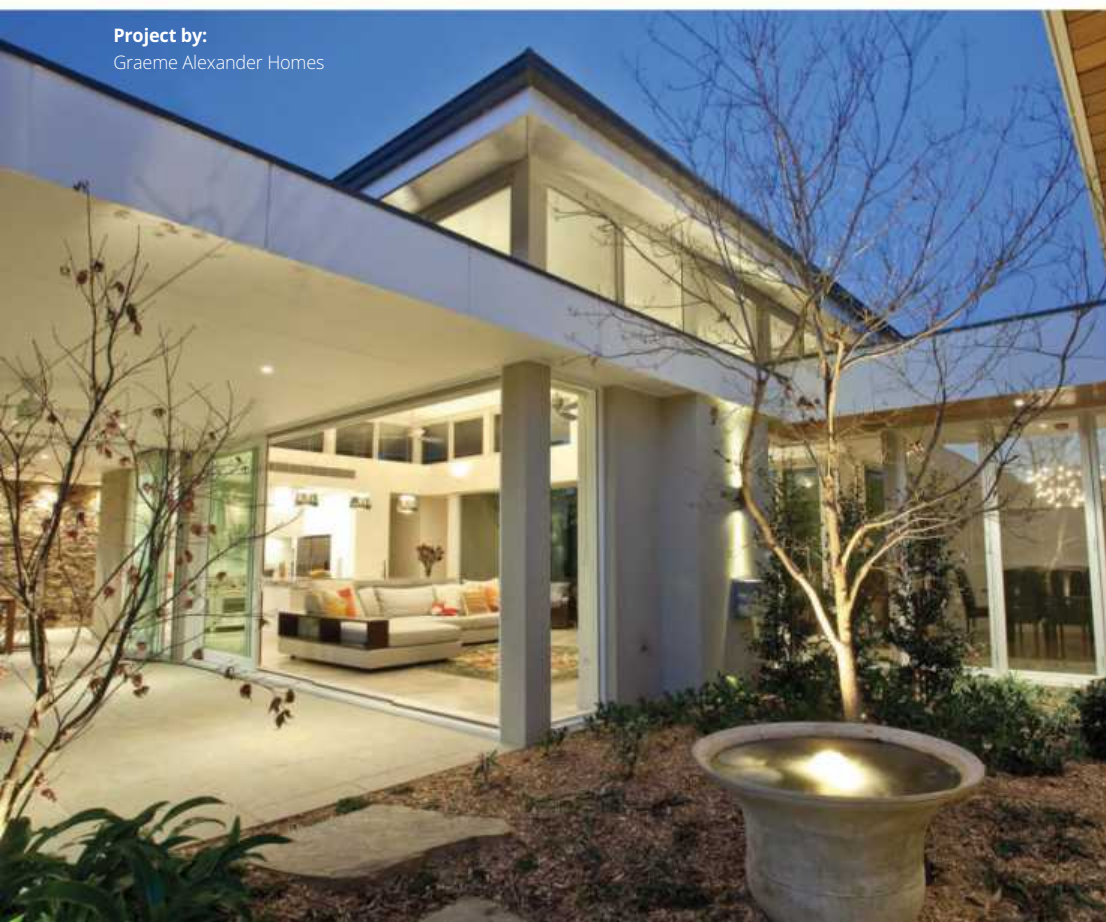
I hope all of our inspiring features, innovative homes and must-have products will motivate you to bring your dream home to life.

Happy building!

Stephanie Dunbar
Editor

Don't forget you can find even more information about the companies featured in the magazine, free how-to guides, expert advice and much more online at completehome.com.au.

Project by:
Graeme Alexander Homes



Buildhome

SHOWCASING THE BEST BUILDERS IN VICTORIA

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Ensure your contract contains all of the necessary elements with this checklist

NEWS AND TRENDS

WHAT'S NEW? WHAT'S HOT? HERE ARE THE LATEST OFFERINGS FROM THE BUILDING INDUSTRY

A HEALTHY INTERIOR

We all know that nutrition and fitness are important parts of keeping our bodies healthy, but should we be thinking outside the box and considering other elements responsible for impacting on our wellbeing? How could the spaces we live and work in affect us and our loved ones and how can we create healthier living environments?

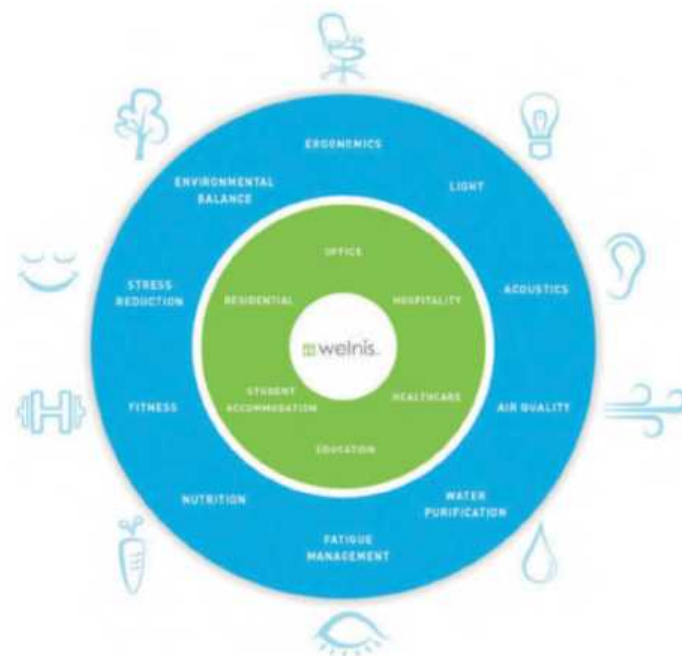
Welnis — an interior consultancy and fitout specialist focusing on creating healthy interiors — has found that while the natural outdoor world offers the perfect balance needed for human health, our man-made interiors often lack the important elements essential to health.

According to Nigel Hobbs, founder of the Welnis Labs, many people spend more than 90 per cent of their time indoors. With so much time spent between four walls, there are particular protocols and solutions to consider in order to create a space that is as beneficial as the outside world.

Nigel says that “over a number of years both traditional forms of interior wellness coupled with the latest scientific insights were studied. Ten protocols were identified and subsequent solutions suggested to keep the interiors we inhabit healthy.”

The categories include ergonomics, light, acoustics, air quality, water purification, fatigue management, nutrition, fitness, stress reduction and environmental balance. Of course, elements such as low-VOC paints and the use of non-toxic materials should be considered, but small improvements in the categories outlined by Nigel may go a long way to creating a happy and healthy environment for our homes and therefore ourselves.

welnis.com.au



TREND ALERT! EARTH TONES ARE IN FOR SPRING

The leading colour experts at Dulux predict natural earthy tones will be the colours for spring 2015. As we increasingly aspire to get in touch with nature and reduce our impact on the environment, the Dulux Earthwerks palette responds to our desires to have greenery in our homes and workspaces that provide us with colours we might find in our natural landscapes. From nature-inspired greens to beautiful earthy sepia brown and ochres, you can transform any room into a natural haven.

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SHHHH! INTERIOR SECRETS

Interior Secrets was launched in 2009 to provide Australian consumers with access to beautiful modern furniture at Australia's most competitive prices. It combines a love for beautiful design with quality materials and honest pricing. All furniture pieces are simple to easily complement any environment or personality. The company has since grown and has become the destination for consumers, boasting the most comprehensive online collection of modern design.

Interior Secrets offers a large range of furniture and homewares to revamp your space, giving you numerous style and material options to help you inspire, create, innovate and design so that your home truly represents your unique vision.

Due to the passion and hard work of the company's staff, Interior Secrets was featured in BRW's Fast 100 list for 2015. For more information, visit interiorsecrets.com.au



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WORLD-CLASS SUCCESS STORY

The Decor + Design and Australian International Furniture Fair (AIFF) had more than 10,000 design-savvy trade visitors from Australia and abroad attend the co-located events at the Melbourne Convention Centre this year. The events saw leading manufacturers and wholesalers unveil their forthcoming collection, while international experts discussed trends for the coming season.

More than 90 fledging designers' work was unveiled at the VIVID design competition. Award winners were selected across market-ready and prototype furniture and lighting design categories. Melbourne-based Gabriella Audrey Aliwarga won the GlobeWest Furniture Award with Wine Stool, and Melbourne furniture and lighting designer Richard Greenacre took out the Dowel Jones Furniture Concept Award with Agave Credenza.

Chris May, exhibition director at Informa, said the attendance and the positive feedback from exhibitors at the 2015 fair were delightful.

The shows will return to Melbourne next year 21–24 July.



TIMBER IS A WINNER

Balmain House by Fox Johnston Architects
Photography Brett Broadman

Timber is the new black so to speak as it has quickly become a must have within the home. Due to our sudden infatuation with Scandinavian design we are embracing the classic and minimalist styles, which incorporate timber in neutral tones, in every aspect of the home, including the kitchen and bathroom. According to Intergrain's latest trend report, this style is here to stay and we will continue to see timber pop up in creative ways around the home. According to Neil Stonell, from Grimshaw Architects in Melbourne, "As we pursue more engaging and sustainable living and working environments, timber should become increasingly important as a design material."



AWARD-WINNING DESIGN

A home incorporating the bonds of two families became the brief for this award-winning home overlooking the Werribee River in country Victoria. Two sisters and their husbands blended ideas and resources to design and build what looks like a large home, but is actually two units that allow for independence and privacy. The main criteria were high energy efficiency and designing the home for retirement.

The house was built by Shane Cook Homes from Bacchus Marsh in Victoria, who took out the first prize for this building in the MBA Awards for Regional Builder, South West Area — Multi Unit Development.

The tilt & turn windows, fixed-glass units, hinged doors and French doors were made in Victorian ash and spraypainted in the client's colour choice. All products feature triple glazing, with two 12mm spaces between the glass panes.

SMART PHONE? SMART HOME!

How many people does it take to change a light bulb? None! Introducing Belkin's new Wemo Smart LED Bulbs that allow you to control, schedule, customise and dim household lighting, anywhere, any time.

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The Wemo Smart LED Bulbs are long-lasting and energy-efficient, with a potential lifespan of 23 years. They emit the same amount of light as a 60W bulb and are fully dimmable — perfect for creating lighting for any mood.

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DESIGNER HOMES



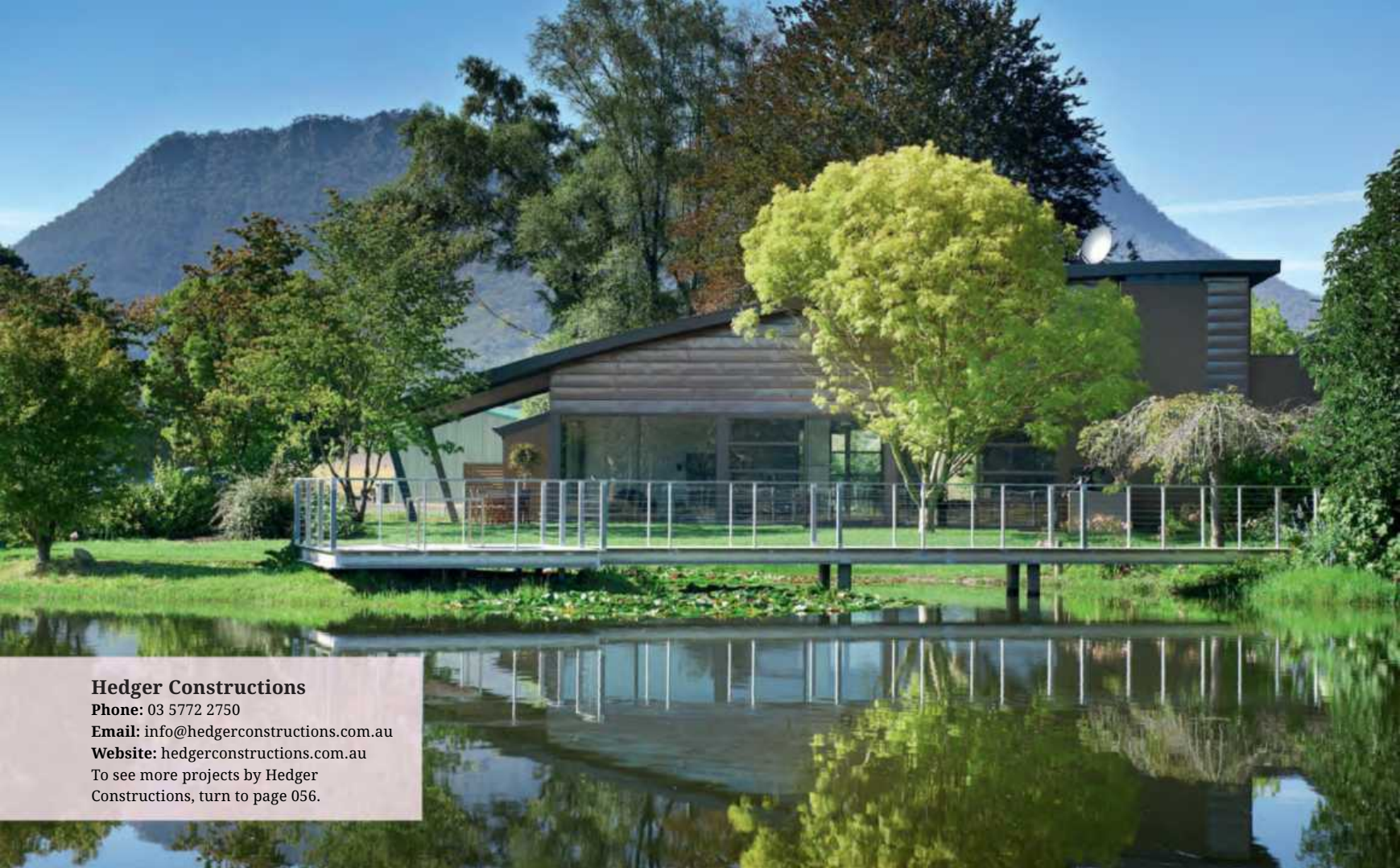
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To see more projects by Hedger Constructions, turn to page 056.

BUILDHOME VICTORIA'S PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDS

WE ASKED AND YOU ANSWERED.
HERE ARE YOUR TOP PICKS

BuildHome Victoria is proud to profile leading builders and building product suppliers Victoria-wide for our readers. With so many great options available it was impossible for us to pick a favourite, so we put the power in your hands and asked you to vote on your top pick.

After a close competition (trust us, it was very close ...), the results are in and we are pleased to announce the winners of the *BuildHome Victoria People's Choice Awards 2015*.

CUSTOM HOMES WINNER: HEDGER CONSTRUCTIONS

Blending seamlessly into the heritage landscape and with superb mountain views, this design by Hedger Constructions captures the true essence of contemporary living in a country setting. Purpose-built for its owners, a recently retired couple, the home boasts a spacious open-plan design, non-slip flooring, mezzanine over the kitchen and bush-fire-proof materials.

KIT & MANUFACTURED HOMES WINNER: SWANBUILD HOMES

Built with family in mind, this home boasts the ultimate in country charm and provincial style. Featuring a large front verandah and offering plenty of space, the Blackwood 4 by Swanbuild Homes encompasses the true sense of Australian style. Accommodation includes a master bedroom complete with walk-in robe and ensuite, plus a further three bedrooms, two bathrooms, laundry, pantry, kitchen and outdoor area.

Swanbuild Homes

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UNIQUE BUILDING PRODUCTS WINNER: THERMACELL

Flame-retardant and vermin-resistant, Thermacell blocks are a revolutionary building product. Designed to push together like Lego blocks, Thermacell blocks are easy to install, virtually maintenance-free and are cost comparable to brick veneer. The featured home was built using Thermacell blocks and is a testament to the high-quality build that can be achieved.

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To learn more about the innovative Thermacell product, turn to page 122.

DESIGN SHOWCASE

A SELECTION OF INNOVATIVE AND UNIQUE HOME DESIGNS



A STRIKING PRESENCE

For a home with ultimate street appeal, look no further than the Ferrara 283 by G.J. Gardner Homes. Catering to the needs of all family members, the spacious house features a centrally located family, dining and alfresco area forming a great space for

entertaining guests. The master bedroom complete with ensuite is situated at the front of the house, providing parents with extra privacy, while the additional bedrooms and a media room are set to the rear of the house.

G.J. Gardner Homes 132 789



A HAMPTON CLASSIC

This Hampton-style two-storey home was brilliantly designed by Stephen Akehurst. It consists of three bedrooms, all with bathrooms, open kitchen, scullery, laundry, dining, living, TV room, featured entry stairwell and mudroom off the north verandah.

The slate roof shingles were recycled from a building in the UK and all gutters, downpipes and flashings are copper. All walls of the home are 140mm wide, allowing thicker bulk insulation. The interior of the home features timber-lined walls and ceilings, wide oak flooring, coffered ceilings, and intricate detailed joinery.

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G.J. Gardner. HOMES

CUSTOMISED WOOLAMAI

With a fresh, breezy appeal, the customised Woolamai by Swenrick Constructions is a testament to sophisticated design that truly speaks for itself. Featuring a blend of textures to the external cladding including Hoobler stone and corrugated Colorbond steel, the house facade has a unique sense of character that catches the eye.

Modern living is captured by the open-plan design that blends the main living areas including kitchen, dining and living room. The customised Woolamai can extend from 109.04m² depending on your requirements. Pricing starts at \$73,980 for the Woolamai 1, building to lock-up stage. Included in this stage is the frame, stumps, sub-floor framing, flooring and walls set in position. All external cladding and external hardware, external doors and windows are fitted so the home is lock-up ready for completion by the owner-builder.

Swenrick Constructions (Vic) 03 8761 6610



FLEXIBLE DESIGN

Designed for two people, this colonial-style home with sweeping verandah, 35-degree roof pitch and Federation-style chimney embraces the beauty of period-style design. The home includes two wings for compartment-style living — allowing the home to be closed off — main bedroom and ensuite, three guest bedrooms, bathroom, study, kitchen, living area, mezzanine and garage. The home is finished with timber double-glazed windows, timber staircase and spotted gum tectonic flooring.

Hedger Constructions 03 5772 2750



MARCOOLA 269

With clean lines and a modern design, the Marcoola 269 will suit any family. It features four bedrooms and two bathrooms and offers space and versatility. The centrepiece is the large open-plan living, kitchen and dining space which connects directly to the expansive alfresco. It provides the perfect blend of indoor/outdoor living, with three sides of the alfresco enclosed, so you will not need to worry about the harsh elements. In a feat of clever engineering, activities in the rumpus and the study nook can all be overseen from the kitchen, perfect for a family with younger children. The master bedroom is separated from the rest of the bedrooms and includes a massive walk-in robe and cleverly designed ensuite with separate toilet. The wood and brick facade and slanted roof offer a sleek finish to this house that stands out from the crowd.

Hotondo Homes 1800 677 156



THE HAWKESBURY

Based on Paal Kit Homes' popular Hawkesbury design, this is a large four- to five-bedroom home with a generous and practical layout, offering spacious family, lounge and dining areas. The main bedroom has a big walk-in robe, with ensuite and French doors opening to a covered verandah area. The study, with its double doors off the main entry, is big enough to use as a home office or as a fifth bedroom.

Dimensions: under-roof area of 278m² overall with frontage of 26m, roof pitch is 30 degrees and ceiling height 2.7m.

The home, built by owner-builders Brad Lawrence and Lisa Cottle at Peechelba, north of Wangaratta, added an optional double garage to the standard design and finished the exterior in painted Hebel panels.

Paal Kit Homes 03 9720 1222



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Welcome **home.**

G.J. Gardner. HOMES

BEACHSIDE FAMILY TRADITION

The Graeme Alexander Homes team recalls this residence as a fun and memorable project. And so they should — it's not every day a company gets to design and build three beach homes side by side for a family of three siblings. Each was fitted out according to their personal briefs and the finished result is three sizeable contemporary beach houses sitting side by side.

Featured is the smallest of the three homes, which consists of a spacious open-plan living and entertaining space, with the dining, family and kitchen

spaces opening directly onto the north-facing balcony deck on the upper floor. The deck is covered by the main roofline and provides a tranquil area to enjoy a barbecue, the existing moonah tree canopy close by.

Helping this home blend into its surroundings was the separation of extra accommodation areas, digging the home into the land, re-shaping the sandy block, splitting the levels and softening the pitch. These elements help disguise the bulk of the home and help it maintain its simple, beach feel.

Graeme Alexander Homes 03 5975 4561



THE CHESTNUT

One of Todd Devine Homes' most popular granny flat designs, the Chestnut offers the perfect balance between traditional and modern design, with key consideration given to functionality and storage. Featuring a classic gable Colorbond roof, James Hardie Primeline chamfer boards and elegant feature entry door, this beautifully presented unit will have you feeling right at home. Step inside to find the beautiful kitchen featuring quality stainless-steel appliances, spacious living and dining area, two generously sized bedrooms, bathroom with separate toilet, laundry and six-star energy-rated comfort.

Todd Devine Homes 03 9720 1686

A LOCAL LANDMARK

This four-bedroom, Victorian home is situated in San Remo. Built so that it incorporates the fantastic panoramic views of Melbourne's Westernport Bay and Bass Strait, it has quickly become a local iconic landmark. Designed by and for Harkaway Homes' managing director, the home is 41 squares in size and has a large feature entrance hallway and an additional Coolgardie alfresco-style outdoor/indoor room to the rear. Harkaway Homes also clad the house in Weathertex Shadowood weatherboards and pressed metal to the feature gable, ensuring a long-lasting facade.

Harkaway Homes 03 5943 2388



THE KELLSWATER MANOR

Featuring box-bay windows, ram's-horn finials, timber fretwork and gable-end and awning decorations hand-crafted by master craftsmen, the Kellswater Manor is reminiscent of a bygone era. The octagonal conservatory has tinted louvre windows to capture summer breezes and winter sun. The home's many period features include 3m ceilings, a wide entry hall with corbelled and capped arches, timber picture rails, hardwood flooring, a period gas fireplace, redgum kitchen and bathrooms, and extensive use of leadlight feature windows.

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HEADING EAST

FROM THE BUSTLING INNER CITY TO THE MORE EXPANSIVE OUTER SUBURBS, FIND YOUR PRIME POSITION IN VICTORIA'S THRIVING EASTERN REGION



Artist's impression of Realm (building to right), council's new library and learning centre, which is being constructed as part of the Eastland redevelopment, and the surrounding Town Square and Eastland.

The new state-of-the-art leisure and aquatic facility, Aquanation, in Ringwood.



Images supplied by the Maroondah City Council

Victoria's east is a cultural Mecca full of character and tree-lined suburbs. Recently, the area has experienced significant growth and has become a hotspot for new-home buyers and property developers. The east has it all, from bustling suburbs such as Richmond, where cuisine and culture are always a delight, to quieter areas including Maroondah, where city and country living combine to facilitate a high quality of life.

This region spans from east of the CBD to Emerald and Pakenham and is the most densely populated area of Melbourne, with more than two million residents, according to the *World Heritage Encyclopedia*. Consistent expansion and improvement keep the competitive property market thriving in this dynamic area that is popular with locals and foreign investors.

Brimming with lush parklands, efficient public transport and cultural diversity, the east is an oasis for family living. The high demand for

home ownership in this area was confirmed by The Real Estate Institute Victoria's (REIV) June Quarter statistics, which revealed that suburbs from the east were hitting the million-dollar median house price for the first time.

ABBOTSFORD

Just four kilometres from the CBD, the lively suburb of Abbotsford offers charming Victorian-style houses as well as modern apartments. Both the creative renovator and those ready to settle into completed homes will feel comfortable here. A prime position in Melbourne's inner city with convenient access to the Eastern Freeway and main city roads, Abbotsford has experienced a 20.9 per cent

population increase in the past decade, as noted by the City of Yarra.

A suburb that young "hipsters" and growing families can all appreciate, Abbotsford has an impressive range of parks and walks, complemented in some areas by parts of the Yarra River. Another unique attraction is the Abbotsford Convent, an artistic and cultural hub boasting an interesting heritage walk. Restaurants such as the iconic charity restaurant Lentil as Anything add to the area's renowned food culture.

Like many of Melbourne's most charming buildings, the Abbotsford Convent was built in the 19th century and is a striking feature enjoyed by locals and visitors of all ages.

LOCAL BUILDERS AND SUPPLIERS

American Home Designs
americandesigns.com.au

Blue Hills Cottages
bluehillscottages.com.au

G.J. Gardner Homes
gjjardner.com.au

Graeme Alexander Homes
gahomes.com.au

Harkaway Homes
harkawayhomes.com.au

Hoobler Stone
hooblerstone.com.au

Hotondo Homes
hotondo.com.au

Individual Builders
individualbuilders.com.au

Paal Kit Homes
Paalkithomes.com.au

Q&J Constructions
qjconstructions.com.au

Snowgum Homes
snowgumhomes.com.au

Solar Solutions Design
solarsolutionsdesign.com.au

Spantec Systems
spantec.com.au

Storybook Designer Homes
storybook.com.au

Swenrick Constructions
swenrick.com.au

Thermacell
Thermacell.com.au

Todd Devine Homes
todddevine.com.au

Yarra Valley Homes
yarravalleyhomes.com.au



Ringwood Lake Park.



Melbourne's east is packed with metropolitan hotspots and stunning natural landscapes.



The eastern suburbs is a great region for growing families.

RINGWOOD

The flourishing metropolis of Ringwood is well situated for families wanting a more relaxed lifestyle facilitated by an expansive, natural landscape that is removed from the bustle of the city but still relatively close to it.

A NAB survey tipped Ringwood as a key price growth area for 2015 but according to REIV and Realestate.com, the median house price has already significantly risen from \$600,000 in late 2013 to \$690,000 in 2015.

Post-war homes in the urban playground of Ringwood are complemented by impeccable modern townhouses and apartments, paying homage to the suburb's humble past but booming present and future style.

This thriving destination's unrivalled infrastructure includes the Eastlink, outstanding public transport, a range of primary and secondary schools and multi-million-dollar upgrades to the Ringwood Railway Station and Eastland Shopping Centre.

According to Maroondah City Council, Ringwood is an affordable suburb "with a thriving city centre, active local economy and contemporary lifestyle options". It's hard to look past all this area has to offer.

CRANBOURNE EAST

Residents of Cranbourne East can indulge in a high-quality, healthy lifestyle supported by an abundance of educational institutions, lush parklands, aquatic centres and sporting facilities.

Cranbourne East has recently experienced phenomenal growth, with Realestate.com reporting a 15.1 per cent annual rise in the median house price, which now sits at \$416,000.

Families and couples make up most of the population, followed by smaller proportions of independent youth and the elderly, according to Realestate.com. Mark Guthrie, CEO of Ray White Cranbourne, believes there are several reasons why Cranbourne East is such an attractive suburb to prospective homeowners. "It's due to a number of things — the fact that it is a newer area, it's affordable, and the amount of facilities and infrastructure currently being put in place will really benefit anybody buying a property there in the future."

BH tips Cranbourne East as the growing suburb to watch, from its fun-filled skate parks to beautiful Royal Botanic Gardens, it's clear this area has something for everyone.

Melbourne's east is a diverse and enticing region that is equipped to meet the expectations, desires and demands of a variety of different people. With significant growth and development currently underway in this area, the time is ripe to take advantage of the fantastic opportunity to invest in a house and land package, renovate a tired property or make an existing home your own.

Also adored by young and old is the Collingwood Children's Farm, an organisation that fosters a strong sense of community and brings a country vibe to city people. Milk a cow, visit a farmer's market or relax by the Yarra River on the farm's seven hectares of paddocks, shady trees and rustic buildings.

For those focused on family, Abbotsford has the highly esteemed Sophia Mundi Steiner School and a primary school and is in close proximity to secondary schools. It's no surprise that in REIV's June quarter results, Abbotsford was one of 10 new Melbourne suburbs to reach the million-dollar median, with a 10 per cent increase from last year to \$1,043,000 in 2015.

GLEN IRIS

About 20 minutes from the CBD, you will find the leafy suburb of Glen Iris, with wide, tree-lined roads, excellent transport services and close proximity to major shopping

centres in neighbouring suburbs Camberwell and Chadstone. Realestate.com reported that the median house price has risen 5.1 per cent annually since 2010 and it now sits at a hefty \$1,542,000, making it one of Melbourne's most sought-after suburbs.

Land sizes are generally larger, with house styles ranging from 1930s elegance to modern minimalism, although units and unique house renovation opportunities offer a more affordable entry into the suburb.

In the March quarter this year, REIV published a significant 11.8 per cent increase in median house prices and with a NAB economics survey predicting above-average price growth in the area for 2015, it is a hotspot for property owners and investors. Glen Iris is also ideal for young and established families, with excellent access to parks and reserves and to primary, secondary and tertiary education institutions including a number of Melbourne's prestigious private schools.



2015 HIA-CSR AUSTRALIAN HOUSING AWARDS

THE HIA-CSR AUSTRALIAN HOUSING AWARDS CELEBRATE SOME OF THE MOST SPECTACULAR DESIGNS AND BUILDS FROM AROUND AUSTRALIA. *BUILDHOME* EXPLORES THIS YEAR'S WINNERS

On May 22 2015, the 2015 HIA-CSR Australian Housing Awards were announced at the Gold Coast Convention & Exhibition Centre. Every year the awards feature some of Australia's most talented members of the housing industry and celebrate the talent and skill of those involved.

Entrants come from across Australia and are a testament to the innovative nature of the building industry in this country. This year, the judges were blown away by the professionalism and talent shown by the entrants. The projects are both impressive and inspiring across the board.

THE MAJOR WINNERS

Australian Home of the Year,
partnered by CSR
Gransden Construction, Western Australia

Australian Custom Built Home,
partnered by Stramit Building Products
Gransden Construction, Western Australia

Australian Display Home,
partnered by NewHomesGuide.com.au
Metricon Homes, South Australia

Australian Renovation/Addition Project,
partnered by HIA Insurance Services
Spacemaker Home Extensions, Victoria

Australian Apartment of the Year,
partnered by HIA Finance
Giorgi Exclusive Homes, Western Australia

Australian Apartment Complex,
partnered by Toyota Fleet
Mirvac Docklands Pty Ltd, Victoria

Australian Townhouse/Villa of the Year,
partnered by NewHomesGuide.com.au
BCG Constructions Pty Ltd, Victoria

Australian Townhouse/Villa Development,
partnered by Rheem Australia
Strongbuild, NSW



AUSTRALIAN HOME OF THE YEAR
WINNER: GRANSDEN CONSTRUCTION,
WESTERN AUSTRALIA
PARTNER: CSR

"The truly bespoke home blends beautifully with its rural bush surroundings. The home is opulent with influences of Japanese architecture. The contemporary pavilion design offers clearly defined living and sleeping areas. The judges were impressed with the execution of the details and the material combination, and described this home as an exemplary masterpiece." Gransden.com.au

FINALISTS:

- Metricon Homes, South Australia
- Planbuild Homes, Queensland
- Stonehaven Homes, Victoria
- Spacemaker Home Extensions, Victoria
- BCG Constructions Pty Ltd, Victoria
- Giorgi Exclusive Homes, Western Australia



Australian Spec Home,
partnered by Stratco Australia
 Stonehaven Homes, Victoria

Australian Project Home,
partnered by OneSteel Reinforcing
 Planbuild Homes, Queensland

Australian Kitchen Design,
partnered by Laminex Australia
 JAG Kitchens, South Australia

Australian Kitchen of the Year,
partnered by Laminex Australia
 JAG Kitchens, South Australia

Australian Bathroom Design,
partnered by GWA Bathrooms & Kitchens
 Brindabella Bathrooms, NSW

Australian Bathroom of the Year,
partnered by GWA Bathrooms & Kitchens
 Bubbles Bathrooms, Victoria

Australian Special Purpose Housing Project,
partnered by HIA Vehicles
 Strongbuild, NSW

Australian Outdoor Project,
partnered by HIA Insurance Services
 Crown Group, NSW

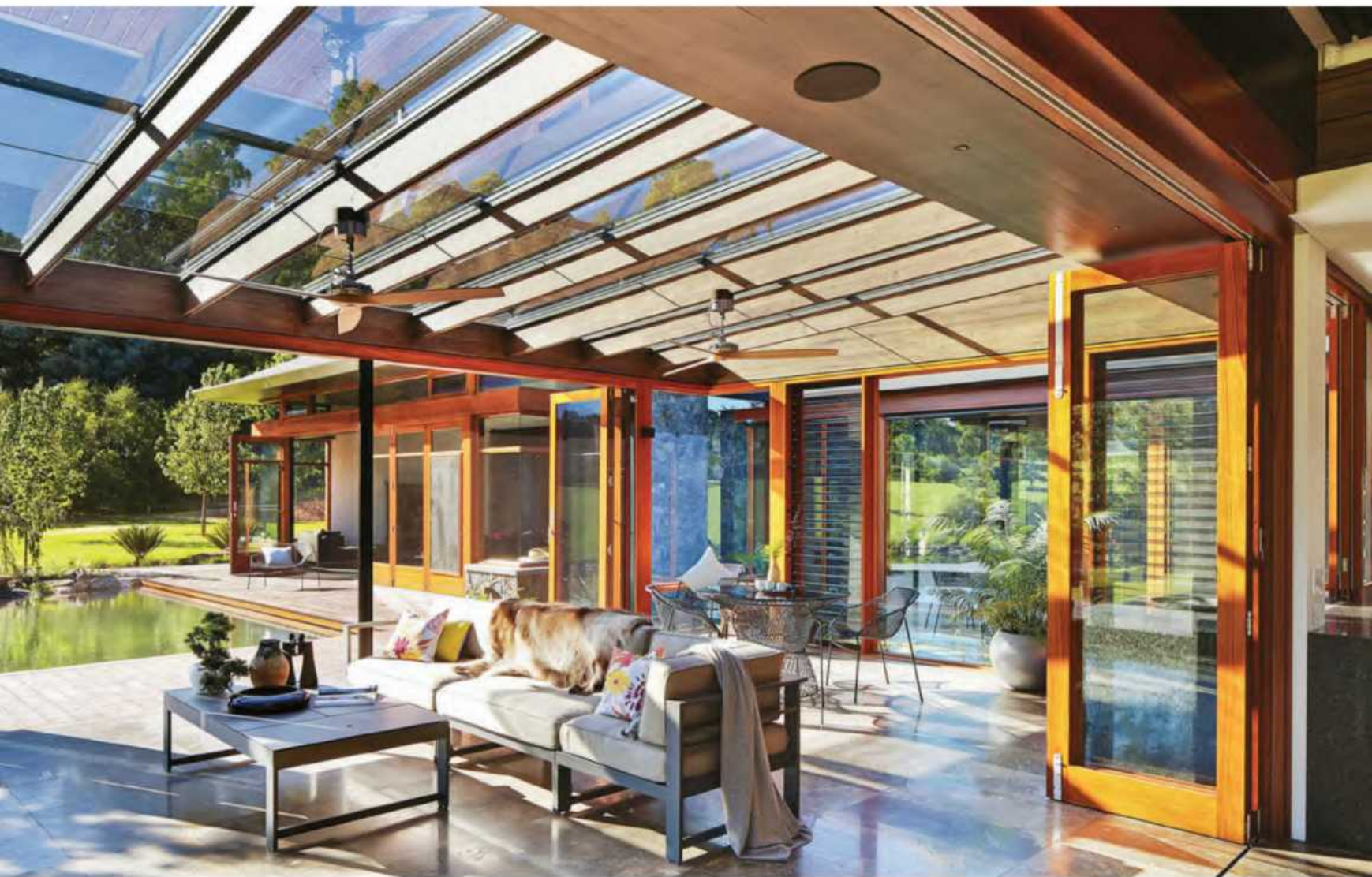
Jim Brookes Australian Apprentice,
partnered by Stratco Australia
 Adam Cocks, South Australia

Australian Business Partner,
partnered by BUPA HIA Health Plan
 Rebecca Rossi, Western Australia

Australian Professional Small Builder / Renovator,
partnered by Reece
 Ronald Young & Co Builders, Tasmania

Australian Professional Medium Builder / Renovator,
partnered by Reece
 Latitude 37 Group, Victoria

Australian Professional Major Builder,
partnered by Reece
 Henley Properties Group, Victoria



AUSTRALIAN CUSTOM BUILT HOME

**WINNER: GRANDSEN CONSTRUCTION,
WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

PARTNER: STRAMIT BUILDING PRODUCTS

"This home is a true example of quality, workmanship, clever design and smart choice in materials.

"The home features stone walls, with rock excavated and crushed on-site. The rammed earth walls, slate roof and teak windows and doors combine to create a sense of calmness and tranquillity." Gransden.com.au

AUSTRALIAN DISPLAY HOME

WINNER: METRICON HOMES, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

PARTNER: NEWHOMESGUIDE.COM.AU

"The Chicago is influenced by modern living and the great architect Frank Lloyd Wright. It delivers a striking sense of style, comfort and high quality craftsmanship. The timeless, classically-styled facade, with its wide eaves and broad portico, ensures a commanding street presence.

"The judges described it as exceptional quality meets innovative design, to suit the needs of a growing family." Metricon.com.au





AUSTRALIAN PROJECT HOME

WINNER: PLANBUILD HOMES, QUEENSLAND

PARTNER: ONESTEEL REINFORCING

"Boasting quality finishes and attention to detail throughout, judges commented that Planbuild Homes has produced a striking five-bedroom home. They were praised for producing a generously proportioned home within a 10-metre-wide allotment, all at a very reasonable cost. The home encompasses the perfect blend of resort-style luxury and family living." Planbuild.com.au

AUSTRALIAN RENOVATION/ ADDITION PROJECT

**WINNER: SPACEMAKER HOME
EXTENSIONS, VICTORIA**

PARTNER: HIA INSURANCE SERVICES

"Originally built in the 1930s, each of this home's three levels has been extended. The spacious living and kitchen zone is complete with butler's pantry and cool room. The living area opens to a large, north-facing alfresco, accessed through three-metre-wide sliding doors. The Moroccan encaustic tiles feature both inside and out, making for stylish year-round entertaining." Spacemaker.com.au



AUSTRALIAN SPEC HOME

WINNER: STONEHAVEN HOMES, VICTORIA

PARTNER: STRATCO AUSTRALIA

"The steep nature of the site — with its six-metre fall — required an innovative approach. The home appears single-storey from the street, however it steps down to two levels at the rear. The judges commented that this high quality home meets the demands of a wide cross-section of the market." Stonehavenhomes.com.au



AUSTRALIAN TOWNHOUSE/ VILLA OF THE YEAR

**WINNER: BCG CONSTRUCTIONS PTY LTD,
VICTORIA**

PARTNER: NEWHOMESGUIDE.COM.AU

"The townhouse boasts luxurious appointments and meticulous attention to detail. Its eye-catching facade is a combination of rusted Coreten metal cladding, split-faced bricks, ironbark board cladding, batten timber cladding. The judges were particularly impressed with the use of high quality fixtures and fittings, as well as the construction which exhibited the ultimate in fine detailing." bcgcon.com.au



AUSTRALIAN APARTMENT COMPLEX
WINNER: MIRVAC DOCKLANDS
PTY LTD, VICTORIA

PARTNER: TOYOTA FLEET

"Mirvac's Yarra point in Melbourne's Docklands is a luxury apartment development. Offering a broad range of apartment types spread over 31 levels, the development has no shortage of amenities. Occupants have access to a resident's lounge, business centre, resident's herb and vegetable garden, and gymnasium." mirvac.com.au



"THE FEEL OF THE HOME IS POSSIBLY THE MOST IMPORTANT AS IT NEEDS TO REFLECT THE OWNER'S PERSONALITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH IT IS TO SIT."
— DESIGNER, DIRECTOR AND BUILDER OF GRAEME ALEXANDER HOMES PTY LTD, GRAEME ALEXANDER.

Your home should be a reflection of you, both inside and out.

A project by Graeme Alexander Homes.

DESIGNED FOR YOU

CREATING THE PERFECT FLOORPLAN

Your individual lifestyle will dictate most of the design aspects of your home.



A project by Graeme Alexander Homes.



CONSIDER THIS

When thinking about the future of your home there are a few questions you need to ask yourself:

- How many children do we have and do we plan to have more?
- Do we have any older relatives that are likely to live with us?
- Will wheelchair access be required?
- Do we have frequent house guests that stay for extended periods?
- Does one partner work late?
- Do we or will we one day work from home?
- Are clients likely to visit?
- How long do we want to live in this house?
- What can I do to provide future flexibility in order to add or extend the home later?
- Do we like to cook and entertain?
- What spaces could be dual-purpose?
- Do we want technology in bedrooms or outside the home?
- Are there specific design themes that need to be considered?
- Seasons — how will different times of the day and year impact on where we will want to be in the home?
- Do we prefer open-living spaces or individual rooms?

A well-thought-out floorplan is the basis for any home, especially one that will stand the test of time and cater to your family's needs well into the future. There is so much to think about, from the overall blueprint to each individual nook, so it's important you spend ample time considering your current and future needs for the new home.

FROM CONCEPT TO CREATION

Your individual lifestyle will dictate a lot of the design aspects of your home. We are all very unique so a floorplan that suits one family may not suit another.

When designing your own house, remember this is the time you can literally build your dream home, tailored to your lifestyle, so don't get caught up on trends or rooms you "must have". For example, if you are a devoted cyclist, then investing in a room to keep your bike, bike trainer, spare wheels and kit will be a dream come true and a better investment than another guest bathroom. On the other hand, if you are an avid entertainer, then a larger kitchen and open-plan living area will be a better utilisation of space.

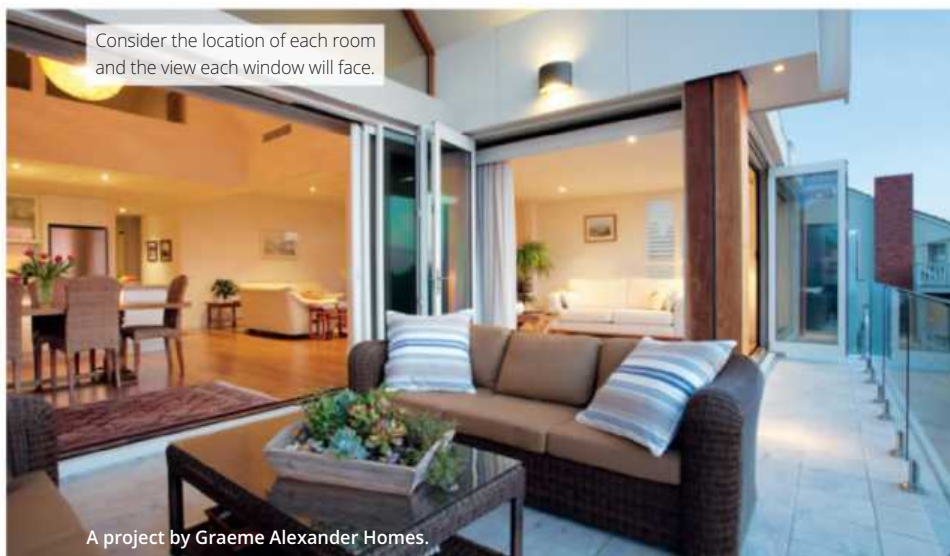
Function and future living situations will also play a large role in the design of the home, says Solar Solutions Design building designer Darren Evans. "People don't think of their future needs when designing a home," says Darren. "If you are a growing family, things like the placement of bedrooms and how many will be an important consideration." While you may like the idea of having your newborn close by in the room next to you, it may be a different story 15 years down the track when your not-so-little one is blaring the latest chart toppers.

Think about the flow of traffic, where the common walking areas and communal spaces are, and where these can best be positioned. This will not only help in a functional way, but also in the placement of your furniture later down the track and will assist in ensuring you maximise your use of space. "Looking at a layout is about drawing a line of where people would walk from entry to family to kitchen," says Darren. "This lets you position doorways in the appropriate spots and in some cases you can get 30 per cent more space."

While this is the time to incorporate your dream elements, there are some practical factors which may mean some components are unachievable. Location and orientation are key factors. You may dream of a second-storey bedroom with large windows and a balcony, but if the view is questionable or if the neighbouring house faces directly into yours, this may not be the best idea. Considering what is in and around each room before putting pen to paper will save you from later regrets such as this.

Be aware of where the natural light will enter the home and how it changes throughout the day. Your house should embrace the individual characteristics of the site and utilise these to your advantage. In Victoria, climates are known for a cooler temperature overall so a northern orientation is generally ideal. Your builder and architect should be able to assist you with these more technical aspects.

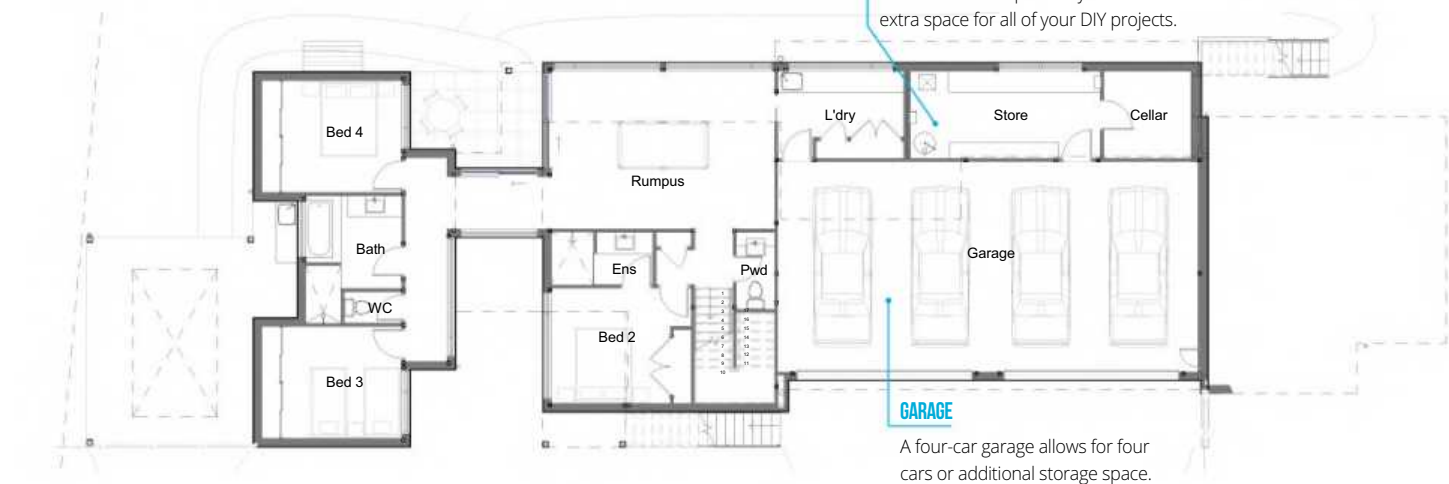
Another factor that will keep your vision realistic is your budget. This is best formed before approaching your builder and architect. Work out how much you are willing to invest and what type of loans you are eligible for. A general rule of thumb is to budget at least 20 per cent more, so if unforeseen issues arise you will not be left in debt. For information on contracts see page 142.



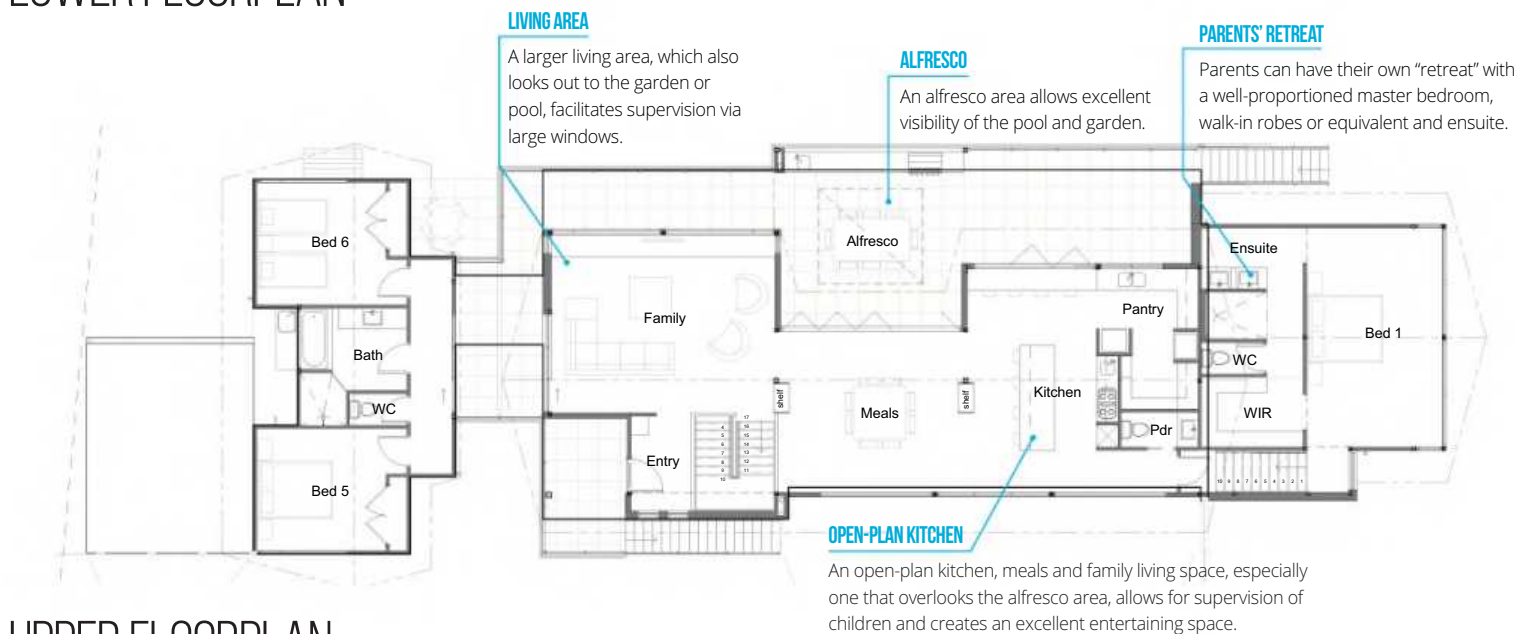
Consider the location of each room and the view each window will face.

A project by Graeme Alexander Homes.

DECIPHERING THE FLOORPLAN



LOWER FLOORPLAN



UPPER FLOORPLAN

ASK FOR HELP

Floorplans are often difficult to comprehend; it can be easy to mistake a doorway for a window or vice versa, so make sure you understand each element of the drawing before saying yes. The builder or architect you choose to work with should be able to explain every aspect and delve into detail about each space. Don't be afraid to ask for help — after all, this is a big commitment so you want to make sure you are completely happy before going ahead.

With the advances in technology today a lot of builders and architects have access to interactive floorplans and virtual tours, complete with furnishings to give you in-depth insight to your new home. These are great tools to use as they give you the power to "walk through" your home before it is even built. There are several online hubs and apps that

offer these types of services for free so you can have a play with what you want even before approaching a builder or architect.

It is crucial to develop a good relationship with your builder and architect so they can create a home that suits you and will have the feel you are after. Designer, director and builder of Graeme Alexander Homes, Graeme Alexander, says, "The feel of the home is possibly the most important as it needs to reflect the owner's personality and the environment in which it is to sit. This can only be done by getting to know the owners in person and the feel of their home through the clients' 'scrapbook' — cut-outs of magazines or photos so we can get an idea of what the clients like." So be sure to come armed with your Pinterest pages, magazine cut-outs and clips of what you are after so you can discuss what is achievable for your budget and site.

INCORPORATING ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The best time to incorporate energy efficiency into your home is at the very beginning, says Darren. "Energy efficiency is intrinsic; it's part of the skeleton of the design. If you try to bolt it on after the home is built, it's overly expensive and limited."

Adding energy efficiency basically means trying to find ways in which you can reduce dependence on mechanical heating and cooling options and rather utilising the natural environment to your advantage. This will involve looking at the orientation of the home and the micro climate. In Victoria, building on a concrete slab will help increase the thermal mass of the home, which can make a big difference to your overall comfort as well as heating and cooling bills.

IMPORTANT ROOMS

Each room and living space will predominantly be determined by lifestyle, however some key rooms need to be given special consideration. Bedrooms, living area, bathrooms and the kitchen are private and communal areas that you will spend the majority of your time in, so getting them right is essential.

“Getting the rooms just the right size is key — not too big and not too small,” says Graeme. To get it right, consider what the function of the room is to help determine its size and shape.

THE DREAM SPACE — THE BEDROOM

Initially most parents will want their children’s bedrooms close to the main bedroom, but this will most likely change as the children grow up. You want to position the bedrooms away from the key communal spaces so they are not exposed to high volumes of noise and other disturbances. Be aware of the type of light entering the room and how it will affect your sleeping patterns. Also consider what type of storage and amenities you want in and around your bedroom for convenience.



Images courtesy of The Good Guys
Kitchen Designer, Julie Hanover.

THE HEART OF THE HOME — THE KITCHEN

Arguably the most important room in the house, the kitchen is a space that needs careful consideration and planning. Most of your time will be spent here cooking, eating and entertaining, so make sure it’s a place you enjoy being in and can be kept looking its best at all times. The professional kitchen designers at The Good Guys gave *BuildHome* Victoria the rundown on how to create your dream kitchen.

Place your kitchen in a part of the home that receives plenty of natural light and one that can oversee other areas, such as living/dining and outdoor spaces. By doing this you will put the kitchen at the head of the action, allowing you to keep an eye on the kids as well as be part of the conversation when entertaining.

Consider what size of kitchen will suit you and your home. If you are a culinary enthusiast then a larger kitchen with plenty of top-of-the-range appliances will be a delight, but if you don’t do a lot of cooking then a smaller kitchen might be a better option.

There are three key kitchen styles to consider when designing your kitchen: the U-shape kitchen, the L-shape kitchen and the galley kitchen.

- L-shaped kitchens are perfect for open-plan homes and those who like to entertain. Typically featuring two entry points, a long stretch of cabinetry that integrates the oven and cooktop and central island, this design will add an airy feel to your space.

- U-shape kitchens usually have walls on three sides that create three very distinct areas, and is well suited to large spaces and large families as it maximises the amount of storage and gives you ample space for large appliances.
- Galley kitchens have been a long-standing favourite of chefs around the world. A modern design ideal for contemporary-style homes and apartments, the design features two long stretches of workspace on either side of a walkway, keeping appliances and workspaces close to each other.

If unsure which type will work best, you can also think about the “work triangle” as three distinct areas in your kitchen design: the food prep, the cooking, and the clean-up. As a general rule of thumb, the space between these areas should be no less than one metre and no greater than three metres.

Once you have planned your kitchen, the fun part begins — choosing your appliances. There is so much out there so be savvy when selecting. Investment pieces like your fridge and oven will give your kitchen the “wow” factor and take up a fair amount of space, so incorporate them into your initial plans to ensure the area is as functional as it is beautiful.

CULINARY DELIGHT

KEEP THE HEART OF THE HOME LOOKING ITS BEST



01 Caesarstone Supernatural Range — Statuario Nuvo, RRP from \$1200m² installed. caesarstone.com.au



06 ASKO Pro Series cooktop. For more information, visit asko.com.au or call 1300 002 756 for stockists.



08 Oliveri Monet double-bowl sink with solid-timber chopping board, stainless-steel utility tray and colander. Available from Tradelink plumbing centres nationally. tradelink.com.au



09 Profiline Series II cookware, available at haleimports.com.au/stockists

02



02 Smeg FAB32 retro refrigerator/freezer, 330L, frost free, left-hand or right-hand hinge. Available at smeg.com.au



05 Caesarstone Concrete Range, RRP from \$500m² installed. caesarstone.com.au

03 The Schock D200B one-and-three-quarter-bowl kitchen sink in Metallic Black. Overall dimensions 1160mm x 500mm. Available from Tradelink plumbing centres nationally. tradelink.com.au



07 ILVE's Majestic freestanding cooker with teppanyaki plate and electric oven and the 90cm canopy hood. ilve.com.au



10 Caesarstone Concrete Range, RRP from \$500m² installed. caesarstone.com.au



Blue Hills Cottages

Builder & Designer of Period Homes of Distinction



CLAIRMORRIS



KELLSWATER



KINTAIL



CARRISBROOK



MAPLE COTTAGE



KIEWA COTTAGE - LOCK UP STAGE

Blue Hills Cottages have built a reputation for designing and building high quality period reproduction homes. All homes are hand built on site by experienced master craftsmen. Builder's insurance and warranty applies to all work undertaken by Blue Hills Cottages.



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Now Building in Victoria Only www.bluehillscottages.com.au

KNOCK DOWN AND REBUILD

RECREATE YOUR HOME TO SUIT YOUR INDIVIDUAL LIFESTYLE





Over the past few years, there has been a staggering increase in the number of people choosing to knock down an older house and put a new one in its place. There are many reasons for knocking down and rebuilding. While shortage of land in metropolitan areas around Australia is one of the main reasons why people are building away from the urban sprawl, some may decide they like a particular area and don't want to move just because their needs have changed or their family has grown. We show you why knocking down your old home and rebuilding is an extremely viable option.

BUILDING MADE EASY

KEITH “THE BLOCKINATOR” REVEALS HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR KNOCK DOWN AND REBUILD PROJECT AND AVOID FALLING INTO COMMON TRAPS

K knocking down and rebuilding an existing home can often be the perfect solution as it gives you the freedom to create a new home that suits your unique lifestyle from scratch in a neighbourhood you love. While renovations have typically been the option for home owners wanting a fresh look, the renovations often exceed budget and are sometimes unable to achieve the desired result due to structural issues of the existing building.

This is exactly what Keith “The Blockinator” experienced when he wanted to renovate his family home. With the intention to keep the existing sub-floor and external walls and only redesign the interior of his existing home, he found these elements were just not structurally sound and resulted in a total knock down and rebuild project.

Looking back, Keith is pleased he opted for this option as it ultimately gave him more freedom to create a home exactly how he wanted it. “It really is the way to go,” says Keith. “If you do a renovation you would spend a fair amount and not necessarily be left with what you had in mind.”

To help you get the most out

of your knock down and rebuild project, Keith reveals his secrets for getting the results you want without blowing your budget.

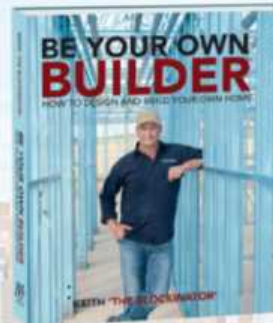
DESIGN

When creating the design of your new home you have to work with what you have, says Keith. There is no point dreaming up a three-storey mansion with swimming pool and tennis court if you only have limited space. “At the end of the day you have to design based on the block of land. Work with the block that you have bought and how you want to live on it,” he advises.

Start by deciding how much yard space you are after and then determine the house size. Once this is decided, move inside and start designing the floorplan. Evaluate which rooms you will spend most time in and invest more space for these rooms. Open-living areas are a great way to blend the rooms together — such as kitchen, living and dining — without wasting valuable floor space. Avoid making bedrooms too small and consider the flow of light throughout.

Hiring an architect is a must as they will be able to turn ideas

Knocking down and rebuilding an existing home can often be the perfect solution.



BE YOUR OWN BUILDER: HOW TO DESIGN AND BUILD YOUR OWN HOME
KEITH SCHLEIGER
NEW HOLLAND PUBLISHERS
\$29.99

Want more advice from Australia's favourite foreman? Keith “The Blockinator” Schleiger's new book, *Be Your Own Builder*, provides a comprehensive, step-by-step guide for the amateur home builder, breaking down the architectural design process into manageable steps and even translating legal concerns into layman's terms. The book is a great place to start your home building research, featuring a glossary of key terms, chapter summaries, Q&As as well as hints and tips throughout.

into plans and give you realistic expectations of what can be achieved. “I designed my new home along with my architect,” says Keith. Even as an expert in the field, Keith knows that having an extra pair of eyes works wonders and will ensure every aspect is carefully planned.

That said, don't be disappointed if the first plan your architect conceptualises for you isn't exactly what you had pictured. “Normally it will take four to five meetings with an architect before finalising the design,” says Keith. “It's quite hard to get the design just right.”

To ensure you move forward with your design, record what was said and decided upon in each

meeting. Working with an architect will also ensure that council laws and restrictions are met as it is their job to work out the nuts and bolts of this aspect.

RUNNING TO PLAN

To ensure everything runs to plan and on time, appointing a foreman is the best solution, says Keith, “You need someone there to oversee things and manage the project.”

As you cannot always be present, finding a foreman you can trust is imperative. To do this, ask to speak with the foreman's former clients. If they have any hesitation in providing you with this information then you have reason



TOP FIVE TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL KNOCK DOWN AND REBUILD PROJECT

1. Finance: Make sure you have at least 20 per cent more than your quote to ensure you are covered if any unexpected costs or delays arise.
2. Clarify: Get three to four quotes for each job. Read through each carefully and make sure you understand the fine print.
3. Delegate: Appoint a foreman to oversee all aspects of the build. The foreman will know the timing of each element and will help keep your builders on track.
4. Design: Design your new home to suit your unique lifestyle and your block of land; don't get caught up in short-lived trends.
5. Plan: Have a clear schedule for the job and stick to it — that's how you finish a project. Create the schedule by working backwards from moving in, to ensure all bases are covered.

to assume they have something to hide. Transparency with their work and previous work will give insight into their work ethic and management type. It is a big job to take on, with many responsibilities, so make sure you are completely comfortable with giving whoever you choose the reins.

STICKING TO YOUR BUDGET

Financing your build doesn't have to be tricky if done right. Sit down with your builder and architect and get quotes for every aspect of the project. Make sure everything is included and set to a fixed price so you can't get caught out on any additional materials or labour work.

Setting a timeframe for each stage of the build means your builders and tradies will be accountable for their work and it will also ensure you don't pay needless overtime. However, Victoria is notorious for experiencing four seasons in a day so sticking to your schedule is not always feasible and can set you behind in construction. Worse, it can cause damage to materials, which will cost you even more.

As a rule, always have more funds available than you have budgeted in case anything should go awry. "I tend to say budget 20 per cent more than your quote to make sure you cover all bases," suggests Keith. ■



Keith "The Blockinator" Schleiger.

GRAND DESIGNS

AUTHENTIC AMERICAN STYLE HOMES

Striking, eye-catching and stunning are just a few of the adjectives that can be used to describe the designs created by American Home Designs. Combining bold external appearances with practical and liveable interiors, designs by American Home Designs will look and feel like something out of an American movie.

All homes are made to suit your lifestyle and budget, ultimately to give you the home of your dreams. When designing your home, an experienced design consultant works with you one on one, paying close attention to vital factors to ensure each need is met, from concept to completion, and an efficient plan is designed for you and the way you live.

The featured home is just one of the many testaments to the inspiring designs created by American Home Designs. Built by American

Homes' builder, Ritchie, the extraordinary house was built for his family on the fringe of metropolitan Melbourne. Ritchie and his wife Jacinta developed a deep appreciation for American-style homes after travelling extensively through North America in the 1990s. "They were so full of character," says Jacinta. "There's a splendour to them and a real point of difference."

Upon their return the couple began importing building materials from America to Australia and later custom-designing and building houses in the timeless American style. Recently the couple constructed their second American abode. "We'd spent so long designing and custom-building homes for other people that we had a very clear idea of what we wanted and what would work for us," Ritchie explains.

The home took one-and-a-half years to

complete from concept to move-in and is the epitome of luxury, with a fuss-free approach reflected throughout the classic and chic furnishings. A clear advantage of custom-designing the house was that the end result was exactly how they envisaged it, says Ritchie. With years of building experience, they were able to inject practical solutions to bring their vision to life.

The home is constructed over two storeys, with a stunning front facade and welcoming porch leading up the front door. Inside, the main living areas and master bedroom are set on the ground floor, while three more bedrooms, rumpus room and bathroom are set on the second floor.

Boasting large windows and high ceilings, the home is flooded with natural light and a great sense of space. An open honed travertine fireplace, beautiful American oak floorboards and





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a colour palette of crisp whites and sandy tones adds a cosy warmth to the large rooms. All the cabinetry is crafted in America and has a stunning furniture finish, dovetail joinery and solid timber drawer boxes.

A focal point of the home and homage to the American-style abode is the "Great Room", a multipurpose central space. It's defined by double-height ceilings and an open fireplace, and enhanced by a perfectly scaled stone surround. Jacinta has styled the vast space with a unique antler chandelier and charcoal couches.

Each element of the home design, construction and styling was approached with intensive planning. A majority of the unique furnishings came from iconic American stores including Pottery Barn and Restoration Hardware. The home is a true statement of personal panache and authentic American style, an example of what can be achieved when setting out to design one's dream home with American Homes Designs. ■

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Main: With eye-catching features, American Homes are truly beautiful.

02 The impressive "Great Room" complete with double-height ceilings and stunning antler chandelier.

03 Colours in the open living area and kitchen contrast handsomely.

04 The home is complete with shingled roof and pool.



04



BRING YOUR WISH LIST **TO LIFE**

STORYBOOK DESIGNER HOMES
CREATES HOMES TO SUIT YOUR
UNIQUE LIFESTYLE



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01 Storybook

Designer Homes ensures each home reflects the client's brief.

02 Plenty of natural

light is incorporated into the design of the home.

03 The home features

a Hamptons-style facade with pitched roof and double garage.



Storybook Designer Homes loves knock down rebuild projects. With agencies Australia-wide, the company ensures every home is individually designed and budget controlled to suit the unique needs of the clients.

The selected example is to be built in Mt Eliza, Victoria, for a wonderful family with a couple of young children. This couple has their own business; both are fashion designers working in the home environment so it was imperative their workplace be full of character to encourage and inspire creativity.

Upstairs, above the hustle and bustle of family life and accessed by a single staircase is their private office space featuring a cathedral ceiling and French doors, which open to a balcony. This design gives them the choice to work indoors or out and is just a few steps away from the coffee — perfect.

The home is zoned for the children to have their own playroom, bathrooms and spacious bedrooms. This area connects with the main house via a fabulous open staircase that appears as you open the front door.

Downstairs, the master suite provides a spacious ensuite and a “Sex in the City walk-in robe”. The guests are tucked away in a private corner at the front of the house and close by there is a third bathroom/powder room.

Off the entry, a peek through the glass French doors of the library provides a glimpse of the relaxing water feature planned for the enclosed courtyard. Out back, the main split-level living area has an open fireplace and dramatic high cathedral ceiling. Here the emphasis is on providing lots of glass to capture morning and northern light. Generous folding doors and an open servery from the kitchen create the perfect

indoor-outdoor entertaining spot. Central to the kitchen is a huge breakfast and conversation island bench and hidden in the corner is a family-sized pantry.

Although Storybook Designer Homes places great importance on street appeal, this house looks terrific from every aspect. It captures the client’s brief perfectly, delivering a design in the Hamptons style and catering to the family’s lifestyle.

To bring your wish list to life, visit the Storybook Designer Homes website to view hundreds of inspiring design solutions. ■

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Storybook Designer Homes
 Website: storybook.com.au

A CLASSIC TRANSFORMATION

HARKAWAY HOMES ARE EXPERTS AT CRAFTING NEW HOMES THAT SUIT THE INDIVIDUAL LIFESTYLE OF THEIR CLIENTS

Knock down and rebuild projects are nothing new for Harkaway Homes — the company has completed many projects like this over the years. The featured home is the result of a total overhaul of an old dilapidated double-fronted Victorian cottage replaced by one of Harkaway Homes' signature Victorian homes.

The owners of the site, a family keen on gardening, loved the style and character of their original home but wanted to create a better floorplan to suit their lifestyle. The cost of renovating was unaffordable so a knock down and rebuild project was decided upon.

Harkaway Homes was the perfect choice for the family as an old-world look and charm is retained in the design, along with modern energy-efficient qualities. The new home is a 6-star-energy-rated home that also features 10ft-high ceilings and shady, perfectly profiled verandahs.

Having previously built a new home and undertaken a time-consuming and costly renovation, the owners were overjoyed with the short six-month period the knock down and rebuild took to complete.

The new home accommodates all family members, including the owners' two sons in their early 20s, and features three spacious bedrooms, two bathrooms, large family meals area, formal lounge, walk-in pantry and vast entertainment area under the rear verandah.

General manager Stephen Cahill attributes



BEFORE

The original home was a dilapidated, double-fronted Victorian Cottage.

the burgeoning knock down and rebuild market to home owners wanting to remain in their communities, but with a new home. "People get very attached to the areas they live in, particularly the older established locations where services are handy and family and friends are close by. They don't want to live on a tiny block, in a new estate where you're living on your neighbour's doorstep."

When commencing on a knock down and rebuild project, Stephen recommends building a home that suits your lifestyle but still blends

into the landscape. "Build a home that suits your area and the surrounding homes. In older areas don't build a modern home that will stick out like a sore thumb." ■

Harkaway Homes

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Website: harkawayhomes.com.au



Internal finishes retain the classic features of a Victorian Home.

AFTER

A classic Victorian style home by Harkaway Homes.



PROJECT PARTICULARS

Area: Upper Ferntree Gully, at the foot of the Dandenong Ranges

Style of new home: Victorian Traditional

Size of new home: 20 squares (186m²)

Price of the project: \$105,852 (Lock Up Package)

Rebuild time: Six months

HARKAWAY HOMES



Sympathetic Urban Renewal

harkawayhomes.com.au

CUSTOM-BUILT

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For home builders who know exactly what they want, there is no substitute for a custom-built house. Finding a reputable builder is the first, and perhaps the most important, step in the process towards creating your dream home — one designed to your needs, style and site in mind. A custom builder will guide you through everything, from the design to the construction stage, and will work towards making your wishes a reality. They can also co-ordinate and manage the whole project to ensure everything stays on track and the end result lives up to your expectations.

.....

Project by:
Hedger Constructions

HOMES

A CUSTOM BUILDER CAN HELP YOU TO CREATE A HOME DESIGN THAT PERFECTLY SUITS YOUR NEEDS





INSIDE OUT

A DASH OF COUNTRY CHARM, A SWAB OF MODERN MINIMALISM AND A TOUCH OF RETRO CHIC WILL LEAVE YOUR HOME LOOKING LIKE A PATCHWORK QUILT. CHARLIE ALBONE REVEALS HOW TO MATCH YOUR LANDSCAPE TO YOUR ARCHITECTURE SO YOU CAN SHOW OFF YOUR NEW ABODE WITH PRIDE

While it can be a challenge to achieve a cohesive aesthetic for your home and landscaping, especially if renovating, it is a vital component for ensuring your home and outdoor space blend seamlessly together and ultimately enhance the overall enjoyment of your home.

In a country like Australia, where we are blessed with great weather and a love of entertaining, it is a shame to neglect your outdoor space. Ideally, your landscaping should provide an attractive place for your family to spend time outdoors as well as add value to your home. In order to do this it is imperative that you aim to match your landscaping to your architectural design and lifestyle requirements, says Charlie. "Internal space holds a higher regard than the landscaping around the home

and I think that is a shame. Good-quality architecturally designed homes in Australia can be fantastic, especially if they are open and light and allow nature and the outdoors in. When they are combined well with good landscape design, they can be a safe haven and a special place for the owners."

GETTING IT RIGHT

To get started, focus on your lifestyle requirements, specific site characteristics and surrounding neighbourhood. Do you need areas of large open lawn for your children or are you more of an entertainer and prefer a manicured space?

If unsure about which style will best suit you, set up a meeting with your architect and landscape designer. This way you will have at

least two expert opinions to guide you and advise on what will work and what won't. There is no point dreaming about a lush tropical space if you live in a dry part of Victoria.

Consulting the experts will also give you a good indication whether they are right for you and conduct themselves in a professional manner. "As a professional landscaper people pay for my advice," says Charlie. "A lot of businesses are the 'yes' ones where, in order to make money, they say yes to any request. Sometimes you have to be harsh and realign your client's requests to something that will actually work."

Next, set a master plan. This is best done with your experts as they will work out the time frame of each job, taking into consideration tradies and weather disruptions. Setting a



Main: Creating a cohesive aesthetic for your home and landscaping is vital to ensure your home and outdoor space blend seamlessly together.

02 Make sure to choose the right plant for the right spot.



02

“SPEND AS MUCH AS YOU CAN ON GOOD-QUALITY MATERIALS AS BUYING CHEAP IS A FALSE ECONOMY.”

budget during these planning stages will also be a key point in what is a realistic expectation for your space. “There is never enough left over for landscaping and it is highly underrated when building a home. Imagine all the things you are putting into your new home and the amount you are spending on them, and then imagine all those things having to be outside the whole time, surviving in UV and rain!” says Charlie. “I say budget at least 10 per cent of the value of the home on the landscaping.”

Australian clients. The European market is more about looks whereas in Australia landscapes have to be practical and beautiful,” says Charlie. “Australians like the family to be able use it as well as entertain and have something nice to look at.”

Blend function and aesthetics in all areas — for example, a barbecue with stunning surrounding foliage or a pool with an eye-catching water feature.

AVOID COMMON TRAPS

The popularity of building and renovating television shows has encouraged Australians to be more interested in making their homes the ultimate haven. However, many fall victim to fleeting trends and are often left with something that just doesn’t work for them long-term. While it is easy to be infatuated by the latest green wall or hanging pendant lamp, ask yourself these questions: Will I be able to maintain it? Will it fit into my space? Will it add value to the aesthetic of the space? If the answer to any of these questions is no, then perhaps rethink the idea.

“Stick to classic design principles and only add ‘trendy’ items that can be changed, like furniture, pots and table dressings,” says Charlie. This will also give you the freedom to add different colours and themes to your landscaping throughout the year without having to make huge commitments to one concept.

VICTORIA’S FAVOURITES

The Victorian climate is considered relatively moderate, with few extremely cold days in winter and the occasional summer scorcher. However, it is still important to choose plants and landscaping aspects that will withstand the climate and last throughout the year. There are three key things to consider no matter where you are building or creating your outdoor area, says Charlie. First include a shaded area — this will help create a balance of light within the space.

Second, choose the right plant for the right spot. “There is no point putting a plant in certain areas just because you like it,” says Charlie. If a particular plant type needs to be flooded with light, it will not survive in a shaded area. Buy smart, think long term and provide the plants with what they need.

Last, choose your elements with a sense of purpose. “I have a mix of European and



Charlie Albone has been designing and building spectacular green spaces for almost 15 years. With a love for the outdoors and a passion for creating timeless gardens, it’s no wonder he has become a household name in the industry. He is the director of Inspired Exteriors, a resident expert on Reno Addict, renoaddict.com, and is the landscape gardener on The LifeStyle Channel’s hit show, *Selling Houses Australia*.

Words: Stephanie Dunbar

OUTDOOR LIVING

GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR BACKYARD SPACE THIS SUMMER



01 Recline comfortably in your outdoor space with the Jasper Outdoor package. Featuring a premium soft fabric and iconic adjustable modules, the Jasper Outdoor range can fit into any backyard space. For more information, visit kingliving.com

01



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02 Invite the family over and get grilling this summer with the BeefEater Signature 4-Burner BBQ. Renowned for their state-of-the-art design and outstanding performance, BeefEater barbecues are built to last and are a dream for home masterchefs. For more information, visit beefeaterbbq.com



03

03 UGG Australia's new home summer collection boasts a range of must-have outdoor pieces. The featured pillows and coastal throw are perfect for backyard lounging in the sun. For more information, visit uggaustralia.com



04

04 Spruce up the backyard for spring entertaining with a splash of Hammerite Direct to Rust Metal Paint. Whether it's a rusting outdoor setting or a planter pot needing some TLC, Hammerite's metal treatments will have the backyard looking new again. For more information, visit hammerite.com.au



05

05 Add comfort to your outdoor entertaining area with products from UGG Australia's latest new home summer collection. Featured are the irresistible Bailey pearl pillows, coastal pillows and bamboo knit throw. For more information, visit uggaustralia.com



06

06 Brown Jordan Fires is a collaboration between EcoSmart Fire and distinguished international luxury outdoor furnishings brand Brown Jordan. Each piece is handcrafted from a functional design and made with earthy elements and natural materials to create the perfect addition to your outdoor entertaining area. For more information, visit brownjordanfires.com.au



07

07 Take the heat out of the kitchen and light up your outdoor entertaining by grilling, cooking or roasting with ILVE's super-stylish Professional Outdoor Barbecue. The built-in barbecue has been constructed out of a single piece of AISI 316 stainless steel, which is resistant to humidity, salt spray and weathering, meaning more grilling and less cleaning. For more information, visit ilve.com.au



aspirations in design



HIA member No. 520358

Graeme Alexander Homes P/L

Designing and building your dream home is a very personal and rewarding experience. We encourage you to be as much a part of the journey as you wish. Your involvement increases your enjoyment from original design lines through to construction and beyond – we are with you all the way.

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FUSION OF STYLE

A STYLISH EXTENSION ENHANCED THE
LIVEABILITY OF THIS EXISTING HOME



The old elevated holiday kit home section was removed to make space for the new extension.





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01 Rooms are flooded with plenty of natural light for an airy feel.
02 Rendered brickwork and weatherboards were used to complement the existing New England-style cottage architecture.
03 Beautiful stone benchtops and splashbacks are just some of the stunning finishes.

04 The new extension features highlight windows surrounding the family room, kitchen and scullery.
05 Transparency across the family room through to the pool is achieved via a practical courtyard.



02

This Mornington Peninsula home was a diamond in the rough for its owners, who approached Graeme Alexander Homes to achieve their vision of a stylish new extension. Originally the residence was an old holiday kit home with an interesting New England-styled front. The owners loved the feel of the existing front extension and wanted to renovate and extend it to better accommodate their needs.

The vision was to level the walk through to the new works, with an airy and contemporary adaption of the New England style. The elevated holiday kit home section would then be removed and an extension put in its place consisting of a dining room walk through into the "great room".

The new extension was a huge success and features highlight windows surrounding the family, kitchen and scullery, all of which open up to a north-facing swimming pool and glazed storm room. On the southern side a courtyard was created to allow transparency across the family room through to the pool. A master bedroom complete with ensuite and walk-in

robe, a mud/dog room and laundry were all included to the rear. The master bedroom has its own private courtyard for a touch of luxury.

This home was designed to complement the original building finishes in beautiful white with a grey slate roof, natural rock and ironbark posts. Rendered brickwork and weatherboards worked well to fulfil the owners' wishes for a contemporary home and suited the existing New England-style cottage with that classic feel. The existing building was modified to suit the new extension, with vestibule-styled entry, new stairs and finishes including a slate tiled roof.

Not only does this home showcase the high quality and great craftsmanship of Graeme Alexander Homes, it also showcases the company's ability to adapt various architectural styles for a cohesive and beautiful look. ■

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SEAMLESS SANCTUARY

THE PERFECT RETREAT

Hedger Constructions has revamped a classic country home in Marysville that not only sets a high standard for luxury homes, but also reflects the town's unique geographical setting.

The clients were intent on maximising the tranquil environment of the local area and wanted to construct a home that had the dual purpose of acting as a retreat from

their hectic work lives, while also facilitating a short-term holiday rental, the "Amazing Bush Accommodation", for guests.

Hedger Constructions implemented these components by integrating a sloping block and an external cladding of spotted gum and stone. The finishing touch was a rooftop garden that perfectly complemented the natural surroundings of the home in a seamless fashion.





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Attention to detail was very important to the clients and as the building progressed, so did their innovative ideas. A recreational area that included a fireman's pole, climbing wall, an in-ground trampoline and a multi-purpose room for yoga classes or other similar activities was added to enhance the overall family-friendly atmosphere, ensuring all occupants stayed entertained and energetic.

Internally the home was modular in design, utilising its spacious environment with a stunning modern kitchen, fully appointed bathrooms, and a double-storey formation that allowed for maximum privacy when required. An underground storage area meant items could

be obscured from view, preventing any clutter or mess.

Sustainability and energy efficiency were integral to the client's brief. To achieve this, recycled ironbark was subtly incorporated into the construction of the home. Its distinctive qualities helped it attain an 8.4 energy rating, particularly through its reinforced double-block concrete walls, ceiling insulation and the thermal abilities the rooftop garden provided. Doubled-glazing was also incorporated on all windows for added temperature control.

With a specialty in hills and sloping blocks, Hedger Constructions, in conjunction with designer Darren Cooney from Earthculture, finished the project with sweeping landscaped gardens that

were significant in both their complexity regarding the slope of the block, and their linkage to the building.

This home exemplifies the importance of adhering to the client's vision and expectations, going above and beyond with unique features that would cater to everybody. It is the perfect getaway from the daily stresses that life throws at you, promising a relaxing environment that will help you stay cool, calm and collected. ■

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For booking enquiries at the Amazing Bush Accommodation visit, 55fallsroad.com.au

Main: This classic country home sets a high standard for luxury residences.

02 Sweeping landscaped gardens enrich the beauty of the property and assist in linking the sloping block to the home.

03 External cladding of spotted gum and stone enhances the seamless integration of the home with its surrounding landscape.

04 Picturesque landscapes can be enjoyed via the rooftop garden.

05 The home has an 8.4 energy rating.

06 The recreational area includes a fireman's pole for climbing, an in-ground trampoline and a multi-purpose room for yoga classes.



CONSTRUCTIONS

Innovative Design, Sustainable Building Practices
Outstanding Craftsmanship, Professional Client Relationships.
These are the corner stones behind the success of Hedger Constructions.

With over 22 years of experience in the building industry, the multi-award winning team at Hedger Constructions offer the total package in residential and commercial construction on all types of sites. Fully affiliated with the Master Builders Association we look forward to growing our reputation as a company that goes the extra step to create something special.

" We invite you to share in our experiences "

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**HEDGER CONSTRUCTIONS**
Building with Distinction

AWARD-WINNING STYLE

FROM DESIGN TO CONSTRUCTION, INDIVIDUAL BUILDERS ENSURES EACH STEP OF THE CONSTRUCTION PROCESS IS AN ENJOYABLE EXPERIENCE

Set on an elevated corner block a stone's throw from where the ships turn at McCrae, this two-storey modern contemporary home is another credit to Graham Jones Design in conjunction with Individual Builders. The pre-existing house had to be demolished in order to make way for the new, tastefully designed home.

Working closely with the owner, Craig McPhan of Individual Builders and his team built a streamlined residence boasting some extra-special features. The exterior of the home combines a mix of building materials including Exon cladding, rendered brick walls and stonework. The home faces away from the street towards the water, with a landscaped front entrance and poolside entry.

The lower floor includes two bedrooms as well as a guest bedroom with ensuite bathrooms and breathtaking bay views. An extra bathroom and powder room make this floor ideal for house guests while the rumpus room and laundry give it that great family home feel.

The upper and lower floors are connected by a lift and also a dark

timber staircase that includes a granite feature wall, ensuring each aspect of the home is unique in design.

The upper floor hosts a spacious living and dining room that captures the beautiful glow of dusk through floor-to-ceiling windows. An expansive timber deck connects to the dining area with frameless glass bifold doors, providing a breathtaking view of the property and landscape. It also stands as the perfect space for entertaining.

A master bedroom with ensuite and walk-in robe, powder room and kitchen with butler's pantry complete the upper-floor layout.

An in-ground concrete pool with external shower runs alongside the exterior of the house. The landscaped garden area boasts an alfresco deck with inbuilt grill, adding the perfect final touch.

Energy efficiency was an important component of the overall design of the house. Inclusions are in-ground water tanks for toilet flushing and irrigation, bulk insulation, double glazing to windows, as well as clever placement of windows and eave overhangs.





Main: House exterior.
02 The residence boasts an upstairs theatre.
03 A concrete in-ground pool runs along the outside of the home.
04 Granite stairwell feature wall.



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COMPANY PROFILE

Individual Builders is an award-winning company that strives to treat each client with individual and personalised service. From initial contact to the moving in stage, Individual Builders offers guidance and assistance to ensure the building experience is enjoyable.

Building fewer homes annually than most other building companies, Individual Builders is able to focus more on each client's building vision and make it a reality. Communication is a key

aspect of the company's building process and clients deal directly with owner Craig McPhan, who provides constant advice and updates on the building progress.

A network of private tradesmen and suppliers, appropriately named "team players", is utilised to ensure reliable services. The "team players" are approachable, hard-working and conscientious, taking great pride in their workmanship.

The company maintains a strong work ethic throughout the building

process to make each element as easy and comfortable as possible for the client. Cleanliness is of great importance and building sites are regularly cleaned to guarantee projects run smoothly and on time.

Craig has more than 30 years of experience as a carpenter and supervisor. His portfolio consists predominantly of construction in the Mornington Peninsula, Mount Eliza and Portsea regions. With a commitment to looking after each client, Individual Builders has gained a reputation as a superior

building company. It holds several awards from the Housing Industry Association, from 1999, 2001, 2003, 2004 and 2013.

"We are proud of this home featured as it was runner-up in the open category of Best Custom Built Home in south-eastern Victoria 2013," says Craig. ■

Individual Builders

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Website: individualbuilders.com.au



07

05 Spacious living room with stunning views.

06 Planned extensive landscaping complements the overall home.

07 Kitchen with butler's pantry.

interior designs, the latest trends and expert advice

completehome



Cosmopolitan inner-city warehouse garden



Twenty beautiful bathrooms



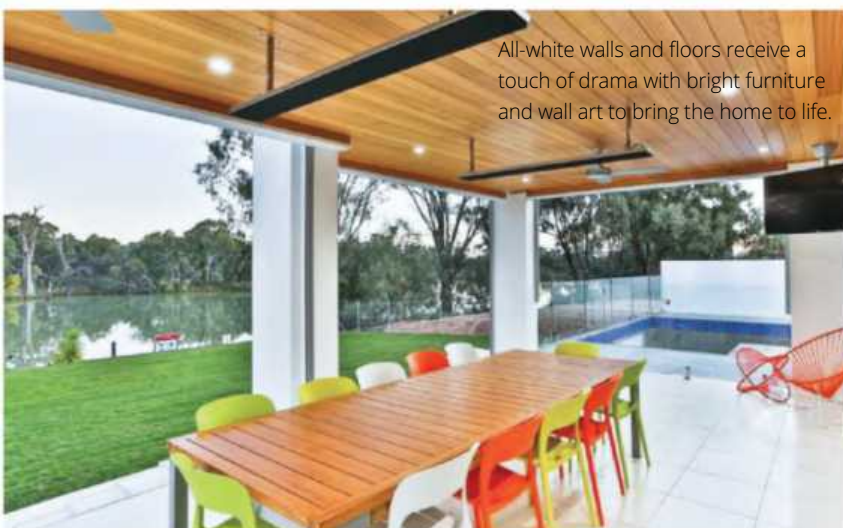
Chef's paradise: kitchen design

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Photography: Corey Brown and Alastair Eagle (Vision House Photography)



All-white walls and floors receive a touch of drama with bright furniture and wall art to bring the home to life.



The modern design works well now and will continue to for this family well into the future.

The home is simply superb, both in terms of design and aesthetics, and the way it addresses the block.

MURRAY RIVER MAGNIFICENCE

FOR THE QUINTESSENTIAL AUSTRALIAN NEW HOME SETTING, IT DOESN'T GET MUCH BETTER THAN THE BANKS OF THE MURRAY RIVER

Positioned on a beautiful block of land with a 30m frontage overlooking the glorious Murray River, this home had to be impressive to do its superb location justice. The vacant one-acre site belonging to these homeowners was not only long, but across from it is natural bushland which provides a peaceful outlook. The family, a professional couple in their 30s with three children, requested a light and airy abode in which they could raise their children and entertain family and friends.

They turned to G.J. Gardner Homes Mildura for the building and design of their new home. "Because of the riverfront block, we had special requirements we had to follow," says Di Stanbrook, office/sales/customer relations manager at G.J. Gardner Homes Mildura. "The home had to be positioned a specific distance from the highest water point and also at a certain height above the 1956 flood level."

On the lower level, the expansive design features a guest room, open-plan kitchen with scullery, and dining, family, games and bar rooms. "The gorgeous open-plan kitchen and living spaces which open up onto a superb alfresco area with ceiling heating for year-round use really is everyone's favourite part of the home," says Di. Automatic blinds keep the area warm on those chilly nights, while still allowing enjoyment of the river below.

Outside, the centrepiece is a huge fish sculpture, which represented Trinidad Tobago at the 2006 Commonwealth Games. The homeowners purchased it at an auction and stored it for years so they could use it when they finally built their new home. "It's absolutely amazing and works extremely well as a feature for the pool," says Di.

Tasmanian oak and white is the main design aesthetic of this home, and the Tasmanian oak ceiling on the alfresco space adheres to this beautifully. In addition, a stunning Tasmanian oak staircase leads to the upper level, home to the master bedroom complete with ensuite and retreat, along with three more bedrooms and a study. Two balconies open from the office and

master bedroom to take full advantage of the sensational river views.

The kitchen's Caesarstone Pure White benchtop and white-gloss two-pack doors work wonderfully well with the white theme, as do the crisp Milano Ice 520mm x 520mm porcelain floor tiles and 510mm x 510mm porcelain wall tiles, all supplied by Beaumont Tiles. Beautiful sheer white curtains on the lower level help to create the bright and airy feel that the homeowners desired.

"They wanted a light and airy home that they could change the look of whenever they felt the need, without too much trouble," says Di. "They achieved that with all-white walls and floors and use of timber, and their bright furniture and wall art has brought the home to life. It's a beautifully unique home especially suited to their lifestyle."

"Not only is this a superb home, both in terms of design and aesthetics, but the homeowners really considered the layout of the block and river views and created a lovely home they will enjoy for years to come. It has been built to adjust to their family and while it suits their lifestyle now, it will still be suitable in the years ahead once their children have grown."

According to Di, the process was smooth sailing. "The whole build went well. The clients were fantastic to work with and knew what they wanted, which makes it so much easier," she says. "The home was built for them as their family residence, although with the positioning of the land and that gorgeous view, I'm sure they feel as though they are on holiday every day when they wake up."

This is just one example of a fine design and build from G.J. Gardner Homes Mildura. Visit the G.J. Gardner team in your state as each state builds and designs homes based on the climate and lifestyle of different communities. ■

G.J. Gardner Homes

Phone: 132 789

Website: gigardner.com.au

The home offers a 30m frontage overlooking the glorious Murray River.

PERIOD-STYLE HOMES WITH INDIVIDUAL CHARM

FROM COMPACT COTTAGES TO SPACIOUS FAMILY RESIDENCES, BLUE HILLS COTTAGES
DESIGNS AND BUILDS HOMES WITH LASTING APPEAL





02



03



04



Main: Exterior
facade of the spacious Bayside townhouses.
02 Open living areas
create a dynamic family environment.
03 Each home is
fitted with a stylish designer kitchen.
04 The interior
has a contemporary and coastal flair that spreads through all rooms.

SPACIOUS TOWNHOUSES BY THE BAY

An old fibro holiday home was demolished to make way for two spacious townhouses close to Bayside's beaches. The traditional exterior is built with a combination of Weathertex and Colorbond cladding, giving the townhouses a contemporary yet customary character.

Each townhouse is complete with three bedrooms and two bathrooms, plus added luxurious features including designer kitchen, open living area, four-car garage and master bedroom with walk-in robe.

The interior has a contemporary and coastal flair while also being extremely energy efficient with LED lighting, low-e glazing and north-facing living and outdoor areas. The homes are the perfect Bayside dwellings for large or small families with plenty of space and a cosy feel.

COLORBOND® AND BEACH-STYLE HOMES

Blue Hills Cottages recently expanded to include quirky and uniquely Australian homes made of Colorbond steel combined with other cladding materials. This gives each home either a period or modern feel depending on the owner's desires. These Colorbond dwellings not only look great, the exterior is virtually maintenance-free and practical for either holiday or permanent living.

COMPANY PROFILE

Blue Hills Cottages is an owned and operated family business with many years of experience. Patrick and Jane make up the hands-on team who provide service throughout the building project. Any of the company's existing designs can be modified to meet your individual needs, or a new custom design can be created to suit your lifestyle and budget.

The company has earned a reputation for beautiful, high-quality, period-reproduction homes that can be built to lock-up stage in most areas or through to completion locally. The couple's son, Shane, has won many awards for excellence in carpentry and creates by hand most of the period details featured on the homes, giving each residence its own individual charm. Every home has a 6-star energy rating and fixed contract price, and all work completed by Blue Hills Cottages has a builder's warranty.

Each home is priced individually, depending on the choice of fittings, finishes, ceiling height, extent of period decoration and level of owner participation — either to lock-up or completion stage. ■

Blue Hills Cottages

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COUNTRY STYLE AND AFFORDABLE LIVING

OFFERING FEATURES THAT BLEND BEAUTIFULLY WITH THE AUSTRALIAN ENVIRONMENT, THESE HOMES EXEMPLIFY COUNTRY LIVING AT ITS BEST

For more than 27 years the family business of Yarra Valley Homes has related to the common need of country Victorians to own a home that encompasses style and comfort in a chosen location.

Yarra Valley Homes' Glenrowan, Drummond Cottage 1 & 11, New Haven, Miners Hut and Trentham homes can all be viewed by appointment. Their sizes range from 8 to 18.8 squares with ceilings at 2.7m. Each contains good-sized rooms which can be varied to suit.

The homes are 6-star energy-rated and can be built to current BAL (bushfire attack level) requirements to meet the new building regulations.

GLENROWAN

The enormous return verandah of Yarra Valley Homes' 'Glenrowan' design (as pictured) adds a distinctive, Australian country flavour to the homestead. French doors off the main bedroom

and dining area are an appealing feature that makes this home ideal for a country setting. The 'Glenrowan' is available from 12.5 to 18.8 squares and features three to four bedrooms, separate bathroom and ensuite, kitchen, living, dining room and laundry.

The 13.5-square (option 2) home includes internal fittings such as kitchen fitout (wall oven, cooktop, rangehood) plus electrics, plumbing and hot water system. This stage also incorporates bathroom fitout inclusive of bath, shower, vanity and toilet, plus tap fittings and electrics and plumbing completed to connect to outside services.

COMPANY PROFILE

The Yarra Valley Homes team is friendly, open and willing to discuss at length all aspects of the program. It can also provide assistance with home sprinkler systems, which can be provided at the owner's own cost.

Brochures detailing the price and size of homes, inclusions and stages of building can be obtained by contacting the office. ■

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The Glenrowan.



Built with *Pride* and *Perfection*



PO Box 527, Croydon 3136 Telephone: (03) 9727 1167 Email: yarravalleyhomes@bigpond.com

www.yarravalleyhomes.com.au

ENERGY-EFFICIENT



Reducing carbon emissions and being environmentally friendly are major issues for many of us today. However, others say they find it difficult to accommodate greener practices as these can be time-consuming and expensive.

Developing an energy-efficient home using clever building products and procedures is an easy, effective way to live greener without changing your

lifestyle. By becoming more energy efficient, you not only reduce your carbon emissions but, more often than not, you will end up reducing the gas and electricity costs of running your home.

As you take a look through the following pages, be inspired by the fabulous options available and develop ideas on how you can create a more energy-efficient home.

Project by: Solar Solutions Design

HOMES

REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT AS WELL AS
YOUR GAS AND ELECTRICITY COSTS BY USING
ENERGY-EFFICIENT BUILDING TECHNIQUES



BREEZY LIVING

THIS ENERGY-EFFICIENT HOME TICKS ALL THE BOXES



Setting the standard for energy-efficient homes with luxurious appeal is what Solar Solutions Design does best. The featured home is just one such example, set in the sunny suburb of Palmerston in the Northern Territory.

A light and airy design, this home uses the warm and sunny surrounding environment to its best advantage. Each component of the design and construction process deliberately uses the natural elements to enhance the home's aesthetic appeal and energy conservation ability.

Like all homes by Solar Solutions Design, this property has been designed specifically for the owners, the site and the climate. This young couple wanted a great energy-efficient house that respected their climate and was suitable for their two children and dogs. Solar Solutions Design made this a reality and incorporated into the design plenty of living space, four bedrooms, kids' retreat, bathroom and powder room, an outstanding alfresco area and an easily accessible pool.

The pool is positioned to be the focal point of the backyard and is dynamic in both its uses and benefits. Its high visibility from the entertaining areas makes it a safe place for supervising young swimmers, while the pool water helps to cool the home during the hot months.

Solar Solutions Design believes the standout features of this 285sqm home and garage are its livability, created through separating the bedroom spaces from the spacious living areas that capitalise on the golf course views.

Main: The pool is positioned as the focal point of the backyard and is dynamic in both its uses and benefits.

02 Louvre windows are incorporated to help airflow throughout the home.

03 Ceiling fans in the outdoor entertaining area help air flow and keep away mosquitoes.



02



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The home design revolves around the internal courtyard that gives the family room a bright and airy feel and can be used as a thermal chimney. Every window of the house can be opened, enabling a high level of cross-flow ventilation that moves air internally even on a hot and still day. Ceiling fans also cool the house and create a comforting breeze that helps keep mosquitoes away.

The design's emphasis on large windows realises the clients' dream of respecting their surroundings as the windows celebrate the exceptional views and fresh air coming from the neighbouring golf course.

Solar Solutions Design is a multi-award-winning company that has been in business for more than 20 years and specialises in energy-efficient and healthy home design. Solar Solutions' homes are custom designed to suit the land and the local environment. The company can also provide clients with high-quality building products at less than trade rate. ■

Solar Solutions Design

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04 The spacious home and garage cover 285sqm.

05 The concrete slab floor is sectioned into a grid in the living room for a sophisticated feel.

06 Colorbond is featured on the exterior of the home for a pop of colour.



06

Backyard

CREATIVE AUSTRALIAN LIVING

Looking for easy weekend projects, eco-friendly gardening tips and great design ideas?

Backyard

CREATIVE AUSTRALIAN LIVING

MEET
THE MAKERS
Innovative
people and
their amazing
outdoor
spaces



RETRO-FIT A WALL GARDEN
It's easier than you think

WEEKEND PROJECTS
Build a straw-bale garden
Make your own starter pots

Get the recycled look
FUN WAYS TO REUSE & UPCYCLE

PLUS Backyard paving pointers | Growing potted microgreens
Decks for outdoor living | How to install a new lawn

ISSUE 7.4
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Welcome to the new-look *Backyard*, the magazine for those who don't just dream of an amazing garden, they want to get out there and make it happen. If the backyard is where you gather with family and friends, if you want to do more in your backyard, be that build a garden bed or lay some paving, and if you want to get your kids involved too, *Backyard* is what you need. In this edition we show you how to turn toilet rolls and newspaper into seedling pots, provide step-by-step instructions for building raised straw-bale garden beds, and give you plenty of how-to advice for building decks, laying paving, establishing a vertical garden and installing turf. We also take a look at two young families who have created flourishing edible gardens and open the gates to six professionally designed gardens, giving you plenty of inspiration for your own backyard makeover.

THE MAKERS
With a little creativity and technical know-how you can make your backyard office or garden studio into something truly amazing



OUT OF THE BOX
An extraordinary, ultra-creative and eco-friendly garden studio has been created with the help of a little ingenuity and a lot of hard work. The 'The Box' garden studio is a small, colorful, A-frame structure that has been built from recycled materials and is now being used as a garden office. It's a perfect example of how a little creativity and technical know-how can make your backyard office or garden studio into something truly amazing.

THE MAKERS



BACKYARD BLISS
A modern garden studio with large windows and a wooden exterior. It's a perfect example of how a little creativity and technical know-how can make your backyard office or garden studio into something truly amazing.

THE MAKERS



ABOUT THERE
A garden studio with a thatched roof and a wooden exterior. It's a perfect example of how a little creativity and technical know-how can make your backyard office or garden studio into something truly amazing.

THE MAKERS



LET YOUR JOY BE CONTAINED
A garden studio made from a shipping container. It's a perfect example of how a little creativity and technical know-how can make your backyard office or garden studio into something truly amazing.

ON SALE NOW AT YOUR LOCAL NEWSAGENT. TO SUBSCRIBE TO *BACKYARD* MAGAZINE, PLEASE GO TO UNIVERSALSHOP.COM.AU/HOMEANDGARDENMAGS

PREFABRICATED, MODULAR AND MANUFACTURED HOMES



Project by:
Snowgum Homes

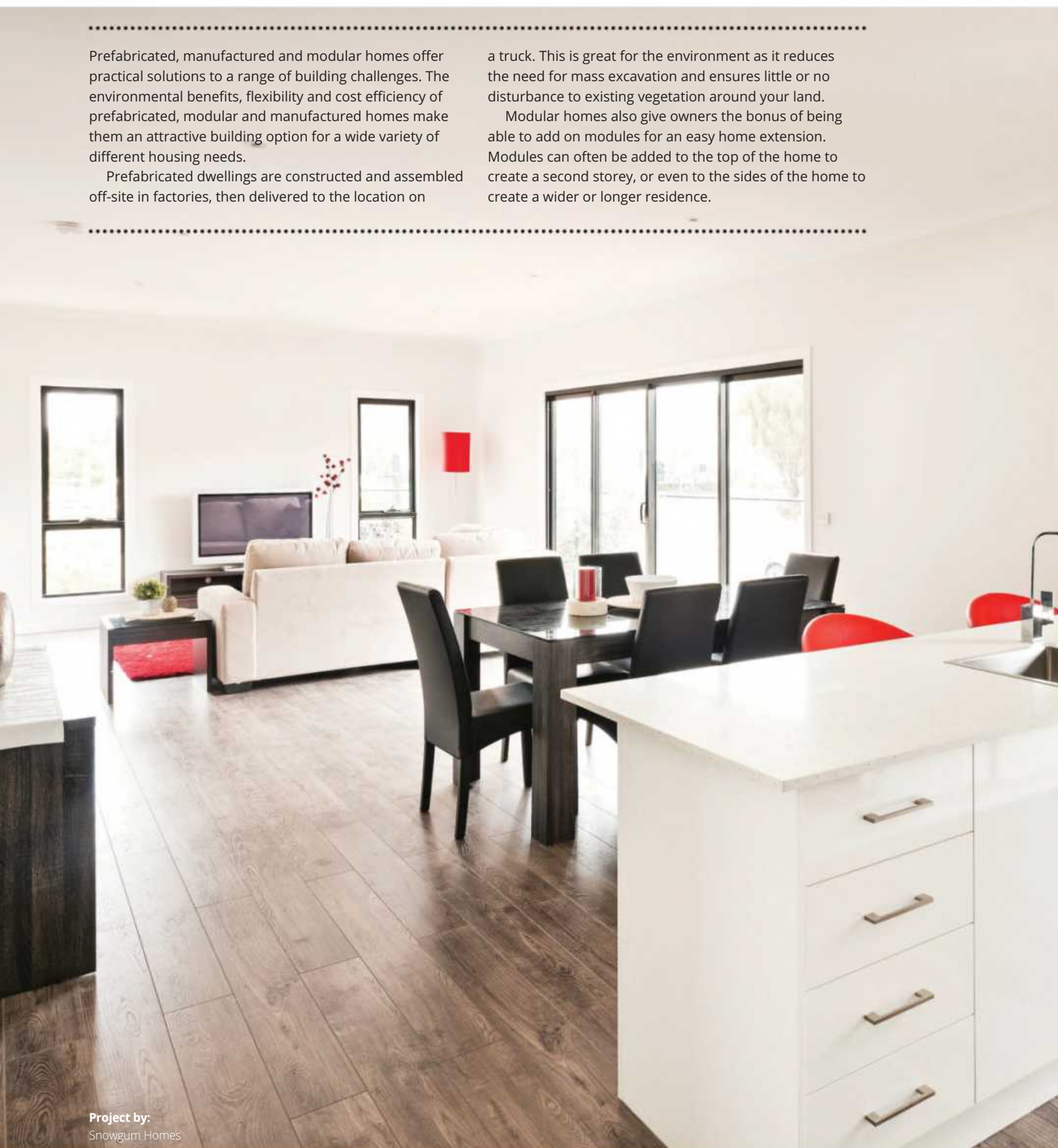
IF YOU WANT TO AVOID THE WORRY AND WAITING ASSOCIATED WITH BUILDING YOUR OWN HOME, CONSIDER A PREFABRICATED, MODULAR OR MANUFACTURED DWELLING

Prefabricated, manufactured and modular homes offer practical solutions to a range of building challenges. The environmental benefits, flexibility and cost efficiency of prefabricated, modular and manufactured homes make them an attractive building option for a wide variety of different housing needs.

Prefabricated dwellings are constructed and assembled off-site in factories, then delivered to the location on

a truck. This is great for the environment as it reduces the need for mass excavation and ensures little or no disturbance to existing vegetation around your land.

Modular homes also give owners the bonus of being able to add on modules for an easy home extension. Modules can often be added to the top of the home to create a second storey, or even to the sides of the home to create a wider or longer residence.



Project by:
Snowgum Homes



COMPACT MEETS CRAFTY

THE PERFECT HOME
FOR RELAXATION AND
ENTERTAINING

01 The kitchen includes beautiful Caesarstone benchtops and glass splashbacks.

02 The home features a fully painted interior and exterior with gloss enamel to internal trim.

03 Colorbond roof with powder-coated aluminium windows with insect screens.



The Nicholson, by Todd Devine Homes, is the perfect holiday lifestyle choice. A rustic and easily maintained home, it was purposely designed for the young, or young at heart, with entertaining at the forefront of the design. With 162m² of living space, this compact, sassy residence radiates carefree summertime living but includes the little luxuries that make it the perfect escape.

The prefabricated home accommodates three spacious bedrooms, a living and dining zone and a large alfresco area. French doors open up to the master bedroom and a sliding corner, glass door to the living area, promoting spaciousness and easy-access living.

The skillion roof design is right on trend, along with the mix of materials, rectangular windows and complementing neutral colours. These bring the outdoor facade to life, creating the perfect backdrop for a low-maintenance front garden.

The external Newport Weatherboard cladding by James Hardie features rendered textures and Colorbond, merbau wood and stone, along with powder-coated aluminium windows. This adds to the angular design, with hardwood posts and decking leading to a solid-feature entry door.

The home comes fully painted inside and out with all plumbing fixtures and fittings included, as well as dual showerheads in the

walk-in shower. With a six-star energy rating, the home has been cleverly designed and offers all the trimmings.

Caesarstone benchtops with waterfall ends and glass splashbacks add to the glamour of the kitchen, which includes a built-in pantry and fridge. The laundry and bathrooms also have Caesarstone benchtops. Flooring consists of bamboo floorboards in the living, kitchen and dining areas, with carpet in the bedrooms and hallway.

All Todd Devine residences can include optional extras, such as larger decks, carports, alternate facades and heating and cooling packages.



04



05

04 The fully decked
verandah and porch serve as
great entertaining areas.

05 The design includes
three spacious bedrooms.

COMPANY PROFILE

Todd Devine Homes is a leader in the design and construction of high-quality transportable homes, relocatable park homes, tourist accommodation and relative units (more commonly known as granny flats), providing unique living solutions for families throughout Victoria since 2002.

With more than 30 years' experience, company director Todd Devine brings a wealth of knowledge and extensive expertise to the process of home building so when working with Todd Devine Homes, you can rest assured you are in reliable hands.

From the totally affordable to the luxurious, each Todd Devine home is as unique as the family that lives in it. Whether you desire a standard design or one built to suit your individual needs, site-built or transportable, Todd Devine Homes offers personalised solutions at an affordable price to give you the right home at the right time — for every stage of life. ■

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todd devine HOMES



THE RIGHT HOME. THE RIGHT TIME.

Leaders in the design and construction of high quality transportable homes, granny flats, holiday cabins and residential park homes, offering personalised solutions at an affordable price to give you the right home at the right time - for every stage of life.

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- ▶ Large range of finishings and options
- ▶ Choose from our standard designs or design your own
- ▶ Genuine customer care and reliable after sales support

Get in touch, call (03) 9720 1686 now!



www.todddevine.com.au



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MODERN LIVING

THIS PREFAB HOME IS THE PERFECT COMBINATION OF INNOVATIVE DESIGN AND QUALITY CONSTRUCTION



Main: The Newport is the flagship design of Snowgum Homes.
01 Stainless-steel appliances are featured in the modern kitchen.
02 An open-plan living space enhances the airy feeling of the home.
03 Snowgum Homes' Newport Floorplan

The Newport has become the flagship design of Snowgum Homes with its modern styling, affordability, and the convenience of offsite house construction in the high standards of the company's workshop.

Designed for rural or beach properties, the Newport features an open design that maximises liveable space and is ideal for anybody who wishes to combine the best of indoor and outdoor living. There is a spacious living and meals area well suited to entertaining or relaxing, three bedrooms, large bathrooms with plumbing fixtures and fittings included, and aluminium windows with insect screens that allow fresh air and natural light to fill the home.

It features 9ft ceilings in the living room, kitchen and master bedroom and has a six-star energy rating with elements including Weathertex cladding to give the home a small carbon footprint.

The Newport starts at \$160,000, which includes everything you need to create your dream home, such as stainless-steel kitchen appliances, built-in robes and a variety of available finishes. A deck and verandah can also be added. Giving the homeowner the ability to add their personal touch combines all the excitement of creating a unique living environment with the convenience, and generally greater affordability, of a prefabricated home.

Having a quality house delivered to your land that is almost instantly ready to be lived in eliminates building stresses such as construction mess, unreliable tradespeople and weather delays. The Newport's modern, light and spacious design is an excellent choice for anybody looking for an affordable and convenient housing option for a rural or beach property.

Snowgum Homes is a Melbourne-based company specialising in quality relocatable

residences. Products are manufactured strictly to Australian standards and the latest energy-efficient guidelines using the best-quality materials. This ensures a final product that is structurally and aesthetically flawless which incorporates the client's wishes and Snowgum Homes' expertise.

This family-owned company has been in business for more than 10 years, bringing together over 30 years of experience in the building industry. As registered building practitioners, the team at Snowgum Homes can custom-build to any plan or can design a home to specifically suit your needs. ■

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NEWPORT

With it's modern styling and practical floor plan, the 'Newport' has become our flagship design. Offering 3 large bedrooms and 2 bathrooms, combined with a spacious living, kitchen and dining area, the 'Newport' is the perfect family getaway home.



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PROJECT AND DISPLAY HOMES

YOU WILL BE PLEASANTLY SURPRISED AT THE
DIVERSE ARRAY OF DISPLAY AND PROJECT
HOMES ON OFFER

.....

A great way of knowing what you're buying is to purchase a project or display home. Hotondo Homes Building Designer Natalie O'Shea says, "Display homes offer the opportunity to envisage what your home will look like. Seeing the home will allow you to pinpoint aspects you may want to change that would otherwise be missed when viewing a simple floorplan."

Inspecting project or display homes allows you to get an idea of the overall size of each home, as well as its layout. By walking through different homes, you can compare room sizes and envision how your furniture will fit into the house. It is also an ideal way of judging the building quality and finishing touches included with each home.

.....



Project by:
Hotondo Homes



MODEL LIVING

A SOPHISTICATED DISPLAY HOME
CAN BECOME YOUR UNIQUE
LIFESTYLE OASIS

Building a luxurious yet practical home from scratch can seem daunting, but Hotondo Homes' display homes offer the intimacy of knowledgeable local builders combined with the affordability and flexibility of a large building network. The featured Hotondo Homes' stunning and versatile Catalina 287 is one such example of the company's vast range of designs.

Building designer of Hotondo Homes, Natalie O'Shea, believes the most striking design feature of this residence is its ability to combine the freedom of shared spaces with the indulgent pleasure of individual living areas. "The design strikes the perfect balance between the modern feel of an open-plan home and the need for private living areas," says Natalie.

The cleverly zoned home creates a true parents' retreat, with an upstairs master bedroom featuring two separate walk-in robes, luxurious interiors and an incredible ensuite with two basins, a shower and a separate toilet. There are three bedrooms downstairs along with an isolated rumpus that eliminates noise issues by



Main: The multilayered facade features brick, render and weatherboard to create a contemporary look which is effortlessly cohesive with the modern interior.
02 A stylish ensuite with two basins is included as part of the master bedroom.
03 Every inch of the home has been utilised to its full potential, including a wine cellar under the stairs.





04 A balcony extends the living area and enhances the flow of air throughout the space.

05 Dark cabinetry and light benchtops in the kitchen blend seamlessly with the tiled splashback.

06 The master bedroom features two separate walk-in robes and luxurious interiors.

having no rooms above it and is versatile enough to be transformed into a guest room, theatre room or home office.

This design is sophisticated and flawless inside and out, with a multi-layered facade incorporating brick, render and weatherboard to create a contemporary look which is effortlessly cohesive with the modern interior. Inside, the main living area features large windows to maximise views and create a seamless transition between indoor and outdoor living, crafting the perfect environment to entertain. Warm coloured walls and bold furniture fabric patterns create an exciting feel but still give each homeowner the freedom to add their own personal touches.

A key aspect of the home is the inverted living area that features the main living space upstairs. The dark cabinetry and light benchtops

in the kitchen blend seamlessly with the tiled splashback that complements the warm tones. The walk-in pantry retains the same cabinets, flooring and colours to effortlessly expand the kitchen size.

This unique and functional layout truly enhances the living experience, with a balcony at the front extending the living space and making outdoor entertaining a breeze. Natalie says the surrounding landscape inspired the creation of this truly exceptional living area and the entire abode. "The inspiration behind the design was to create a home that would lend itself to beautiful coastal views. People who live in these areas can utilise the local beauty around them."

Hotondo Homes has left no detail to chance, from the mirrored wardrobes which enhance the feeling of space to the clever use of otherwise wasted areas. "The space under the stairs has

been taken advantage of and converted into a beautiful wine cellar. The textured brick wall adds to the rustic appeal and makes it so much more than just another cupboard," adds Natalie.

Covering 339.6m² including the garage and balcony, the Catalina 287 is a luxurious showcase of functionality, affordability and an exceptional living experience. Hotondo Homes is a reputable family-owned business which strives to make truly great family homes with its team of local builders. Whether you want to build your family a house now or construct a home to sell later as an investment, Hotondo Homes will help you build a residence that you'll want to live in forever. ■

Hotondo Homes

Phone: 1800 677 156

Website: hotondo.com.au



Hotondo Homes

With over 90 clever and practical floorplans, we can work with you to find the right home for you and your family. Whatever your lifestyle and budget, talk to us today about your dream home.



Erskine Design



Como Design



You're home.

At Hotondo Homes, we know how to create true family sanctuaries... for every stage of family life.

From building in a welcoming ambience to designing light-filled and relaxing family living spaces, no one knows family homes better than Hotondo Homes.

We have Sales & Selection Centres and Display Homes all over Regional Victoria and Metropolitan Melbourne. For your nearest location visit:

www.hotondo.com.au
1800 677 156



**Hotondo
Homes**

AUSTRALIA'S LEADING NETWORK OF PROFESSIONAL BUILDERS

A great find

OPEN-PLAN LIVING

DURABILITY AND INGENUITY MERGE TO CREATE THE SEA HAVEN

Extending over 14 squares, Swenrick Constructions' Sea Haven design is a stylish, sleek and inviting option for a couple or family who want to bring a touch of the coast to their home build.

With a walk-in robe and ensuite in the master bedroom, and built-in robes to the other two bedrooms, Swenrick Constructions has incorporated storage solutions that maximise the available space. The open-plan

family, living and kitchen areas allow for individual touches to be made throughout the build, and floorplans can be further modified to suit individual preferences.

Suiting both country and seaside living, the design of Sea Haven aims to promote a healthy outdoor lifestyle through durable building materials and design considerations. Aluminium awnings, sliding windows and sliding doors come in a range of colours

to complement the James Hardie Axon Shadowclad with Colorbond corrugated-iron exterior cladding.

Using a Colorbond 22° and 7.5° roof in split or single skillion, along with a raked ceiling to the open-plan family, living and kitchen area, Swenrick has ensured a feeling of height and space within the home. The optional alfresco decking at the rear of the building also complements the strong lines of the design



and adds to the sense of length and space the floorplan creates.

The Sea Haven includes a 6-year structural guarantee, as well as a 6-star energy rating, and is perfect for building on your existing land. It is the stylish and affordable way to incorporate a relaxing and healthy lifestyle into modern home design.

COMPANY PROFILE

Swenrick Constructions has been established for more than 40 years and has built 4000-plus homes from lock-up to completion throughout Victoria. The company offers friendly service, flexibility, quality workmanship and originality to your new home design.

With extensive experience in the industry, Swenrick specialises in building new homes, kit homes, extensions and relocatable homes to various building stages. Swenrick is also the expert when it comes to building homes within high-bushfire zones or flood-prone areas.

Swenrick also offers pre-construction services including septic applications, report and consent, planning applications, 6-star energy ratings, and bushfire management overlay (BMO) statements.

Swenrick ticks all the boxes for your project and provides services for water tanks, drainage and excavation works, septic or treatment plant systems, termite and bushfire protection. ■

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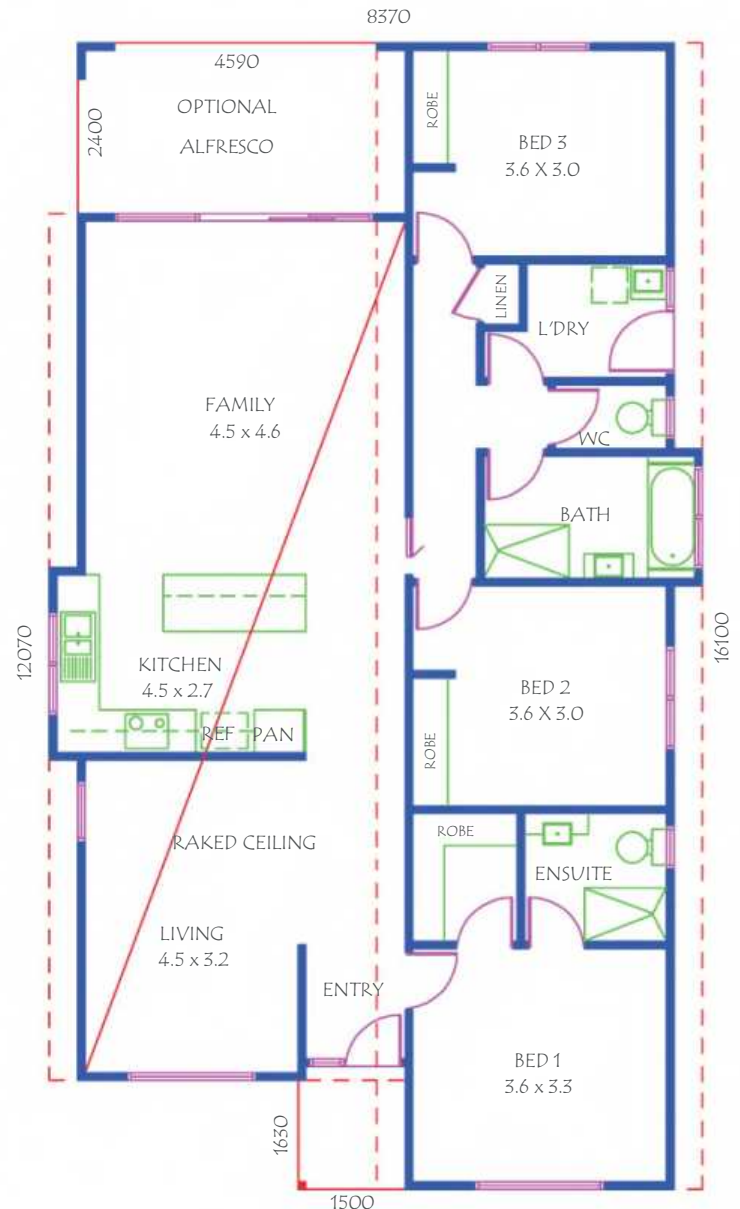
Mobile: 0447 462 844

Open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm,
Saturday and Sunday and most public
holidays 12pm to 5pm.

The Sea Haven exterior.



The floorplan of the Sea Haven.



UNIT DEVELOPMENTS



Project by:
Q&J Constructions

ENJOY A SENSE OF COMMUNITY IN YOUR VERY OWN SELF-CONTAINED UNIT

.....

In Australia units are typically known as apartments, homes, or a group of rooms which share the same entry but are designed as separate living areas. Each living area is self-contained so residents eat, sleep and effectively live separately, however do have some shared spaces.

The key difference between a house and a unit is that a house is a stand-alone dwelling on its own block

of land, usually large in size, and provides private internal and external living areas. In contrast, a unit is smaller, grouped on the same block of land as its neighbouring units, and shares some common areas like the driveway and in some cases the garden.

Units are a great option for those who want the feeling of a house with a more affordable price tag and a greater sense of community around them.

.....



Project by:
Q&J Constructions

LUXURIOUSLY LIVEABLE

AN ATTRACTIVE HOME BIG
ON FUNCTIONALITY



02



This stunning new unit by Q&J Constructions is sure to exceed the expectations of any family, empty nester or single person. First impressions are extremely impressive, with the balanced combination of materials and angles creating an interesting front facade. A modern door and a simple but eye-catching garden complement the entrance space.

The 260sqm home has two bathrooms, three bedrooms and an enviable open floorplan that creates a spacious living environment. In the expansive living area, different textures and materials combine to give warmth to the modern space. A fireplace serves as the focal point and helps keep the spacious room heated in the cooler months.

The kitchen is more than attractive, with state-of-the-art appliances, maximum storage space and a breakfast bench and bar stools. A red splashback adds a pop of colour to the otherwise neutral tones while the pendant lights over the breakfast bench make preparing meals a breeze.

Sliding doors in the beautiful living room open out to the entertaining area. With its tiled floor and striking but low-maintenance landscaping, it's no surprise this outdoor space is a feature of the home.

Glossy tiles and elegant styling imbue the bathrooms with a feeling of luxury and the cosy bedrooms are carpeted and filled with light from the large windows. Timber furnishings in the bedrooms also lend a natural and warm feel to the rooms' contemporary design.



03



04



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Main: A combination of clean lines and angles makes this home a desirable addition to any block.

02 Different textures and materials combine to give warmth to the modern open living space.

03 The spacious open living area is filled with plenty of natural light.

04 The home features two bathrooms and three stylish bedrooms.

05 A tiled outdoor area offers the perfect space for relaxing and entertaining.

Q&J Constructions oversaw the entire project, from completing the town planning and subdivision to ensuring the sleek and polished finish. There was also strong communication between the client, designer and builders. "Jason was extremely helpful and positive and arranged for me to meet Keith, the architect/draftsman," says proud owner Ann Russell. "I moved into my new home in March 2015 and am absolutely delighted with the end product."

Specialising in unit developments, new-home extensions and renovations, Q&J Constructions can help with the town planning and subdivision permits for your developments. With a stress-free approach, the team are committed to providing high-quality homes at affordable prices.

The people at Q&J Constructions are

known for their impeccable customer service and involve their clients in every step of the process to ensure overall satisfaction is guaranteed. "We promise to work with you and your family to ensure that the beautifying of your home is a simple, enjoyable, stress-free experience," says owner Jason Smith.

For a trustworthy building experience that will deliver a liveable, functional and visually appealing house, Q&J Constructions is the ideal builder. ■

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Q & J Constructions



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-  New homes Unit Developments
-  Extensions & Renovations
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KIT HOMES

KIT HOMES GIVE YOU THE SATISFACTION
OF BUILDING YOUR OWN HOME



Kit homes provide an affordable, flexible and convenient housing option for homebuyers. As the name suggests, kit homes are delivered in kits containing all the necessary materials to construct a home and generally include roofing, windows, external cladding, internal walls, ceilings, verandahs and decking.

Kit homes offer the homebuyer brilliant value for money, as expensive labour costs can be greatly reduced through assembling the home yourself or with the help of

contracted labourers. This reduces not only the overall cost of your new home, but also the total building time as well. No longer do you need to sit around, forking out rent while you wait for your builder or developer to make significant progress. Kit homes allow you to take matters into your own hands and complete the project in a timeframe that suits you. Many kit home manufacturers can even modify their designs to suit your requirements and help personalise your home with creative suggestions.

Sponsored by: PAAL KIT HOMES



PAAL'S MELBOURNE SHOWROOM

PAAL WILL HELP YOU PLAN
YOUR NEW HOME

If you live in Victoria, South Australia or Tasmania, the qualified staff at Paal's Melbourne showroom will help you choose your new kit home and guide you through the entire building process.

Michael Jennings and Robyn Cummins are both experienced at helping customers conceptualise their dream and translate that into practical steps, from floorplan design through to completion. "There's still a preconception of kit homes as small, low-quality boxes — or as

transportable homes that arrive on the back of a truck. People are surprised by the spaciousness of Paal's designs and by the quality of the internal fittings and appliances," says Michael.

Some people come into the Melbourne showroom with the intention of owner-building their new home, while others already know they would rather use a builder. If required, Michael will help them source a reliable local contractor.

Once a customer has decided to go ahead, Paal's great customer service continues.

Michael will often go out to the site to inspect and measure it and offer help. During the construction process, Paal's renowned technical support is only a phone call away for those owner-builders who need a bit of guidance. "As a builder myself, I can say that the Paal owner-builder system is the best I've seen," says Michael. "Everything is pre-prepared, there's a comprehensive instruction manual and complete back-up. It's the only owner-building system I'd recommend. Paal owner-builders normally get

01

01 Paal display home, Bayswater North.

02 The Hawkesbury design features a spacious kitchen.

03 The Hawkesbury design dining room.

04 Michael Jennings and Robyn Cummins.





intense satisfaction from both constructing and completing their homes," he said. "They feel really proud and love to tell others about their achievement."

Robyn, who is a qualified kitchen designer, has been working at the Melbourne display centre since it opened six years ago. "At the start of the process I'm happy to sit down with the buyer and spend time getting their plans just right. There are 21 home designs to choose from and of course any of them can be modified

to meet the customers' unique requirements," she explains. "Once they're approaching the lock-up stage of construction, we often have another consultation to help them choose their colour schemes, kitchen benchtops and appliances, vanities, internal doors and fixtures. Most people love their Paal homes, which are beautiful and spacious, and often much larger than expected. The spaciousness is enhanced by an open feel with few hallways and large windows."

Robyn's strong customer service ethos means she takes pride in following through and giving as much assistance as required until people actually move into their new home. "I stay in touch with all my customers throughout this process to ensure that they are happy." ■

Paal's Melbourne display home and showroom

Open seven days

259 Canterbury Road, Bayswater North 3153

For more details, see www.paalkithomes.com.au



NEW BEGINNINGS

FAST HOME REBUILD FOR DYER FAMILY OF YELLOW ROCK

Two days after Jeff and Felicity Dyer of Yellow Rock lost their home in the October 2013 bushfires, they drove down to Penrith looking for a shed and happened to walk into Paal Kit Homes in Emu Plains.

After seeing Paal's Camden display home, the couple decided instantly that they liked it and didn't bother looking at any other homes. They added a workshop and double garage to the standard design and by Christmas the following year, they had moved into their new house.

"It's a great house. We're very happy with it and wouldn't change a thing," Felicity says. "In fact, our new home looks similar to the one we lost, a timeless rendered design that was built in 1965."

The fast replacement was helped by the fact that Jeff and his relatives include carpenters and builders. "Four Dyers worked on the home — Jeff, his brother Greg, and his two nephews Drew and Kurt Dyer — so it was a family effort."

Buying a kit home with all the materials supplied also made for a trouble-free rebuild, Felicity adds. "The Camden is quite a big house, but everything was straightforward and went very smoothly once we had the slab laid. We used trades help, including a roofer and a renderer recommended by Paal, and they were all good."

More than 200 homes were destroyed in Yellow Rock and nearby Blue Mountains towns in the October 2013 bushfires — about 80 of these in the Dyers' own suburb. Felicity and Jeff lost more than 30 years of possessions and memories. They lived with family in nearby Winmalee while they rebuilt their lives.

"Losing a home is traumatic. It definitely helped our recovery that we are in our new home so quickly and that the rebuild went so smoothly. Not everybody around us is so lucky," says Felicity. ■

Paal Kit Homes

Website: paalkithomes.com.au

VIC: 259 Canterbury Road, Bayswater North 3153

Phone: 03 9720 1222

NSW: 113 – 115 Russell Street, Emu Plains 2750

Phone: 02 4735 4377

QLD: 67 Morayfield Road, Caboolture 4510

Phone: 07 5495 4070



01 The Camden display home is spacious and cosy.
02 Felicity and Jeff are very pleased with their new home.



01



02





HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

MOTHER OF FOUR BUILDS A HOME FOR HER FAMILY

Liz Pratt is a true embodiment of the Paal owner-builder spirit, tackling a five-bedroom home mostly by herself and with a strong determination to succeed.

A single parent with four children, her family were fast outgrowing their existing house so Liz took matters into her own hands and built something bigger for them.

"I was looking online at home designs, saw the Elizabeth on Paal's website and loved it. The home was affordable so I talked to the

housing consultants at Paal about becoming an owner-builder and they were very helpful and encouraging."

Liz lived in Kurrajong on the lower slopes of the Blue Mountains, but had been raised next to the Hawkesbury River and wanted to move back there. She bought land on a ridge overlooking the river at Lower Portland. It was a sloping bush block so she chose a steel floor raised three metres at the front and 400mm at the rear. The concreter set the posts, but she

fitted the bearers and joists herself and laid the particleboard flooring.

"Although the site was up a steep driveway, this was no drama for Paal when delivering the kit. They offloaded the truck further down the hill and used their forklift to bring the materials up," she says.

Working through the summer months with continuing 40-degree weather and no shade was tough, Liz admits. She kept at it, drawing on the grit and physical toning acquired

01 The Pratt family will soon call the Elizabeth design home.

02 Liz will employ a roofer to put on the iron, but intends on doing all the cladding herself.

03 Liz Pratt is a true embodiment of the Paal owner-builder spirit.



during her long hours of training as an Australian-representative kayaker.

"I'm a very practical person. I also have lots of determination and a willingness to keep going," she says. "You learn something new every day when building a home. I called Paal a few times. At one stage John Noye came out and checked my work and said it was 'all good'. That was fabulous and gave me confidence."

She will employ a roofer to put on the iron, but intends on doing all the cladding herself. Once the house is secure and dry, the kit internals will be delivered. "I'm showing my kids that you can do anything you put your mind to. You just have to believe in yourself, read

the Paal manual a few times, and when you actually start the work it does all into place," Liz advises. ■

Paal Kit Homes

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QLD: 67 Morayfield Road, Caboolture 4510

Phone: 07 5495 4070



TIME-HONoured DESIGNS

The Caulfield, part of the Fair Dinkum Federation series.

THESE BEAUTIFUL HOMES PAY TRIBUTE TO THE STUNNING ARCHITECTURE OF THE VICTORIAN AND EARLY-FEDERATION PERIODS

FAIR DINKUM FEDERATION SERIES

Featured here is the Caulfield, from a range of seven different sizes and floorplans. The 24-square (223m²) home is only \$124,985 for the deluxe, lock-up package, including GST. Inside the home you will find four bedrooms, a living room, meals-area/family room, kitchen with walk-in pantry, laundry and two bathrooms. When built on a project-managed basis, the home takes approximately 16 weeks to construct, with a choice of weatherboard or brick.

As the name suggests, the Harkaway Homes Fair Dinkum Federation Series Caulfield is an authentic-reproduction

Federation home with a wide range of traditional features. These include high 3.6m external walls, 3m ceilings, a Federation roofline, integrated verandah, leadlight-topped box-bay windows, leadlight front-door frame with cricket-bat-entry door, Federation-line casement windows, Federation friezes and French doors.

The completely stabilised, prefabricated wall frames and trusses are kiln-dried and termite-resistant. Full-frame erection is included, as are Federation cappings and fixings, Colorbond roofing and Victorian ash windows. Internal linings, plumbing, electrical, kitchen and floor are not included.



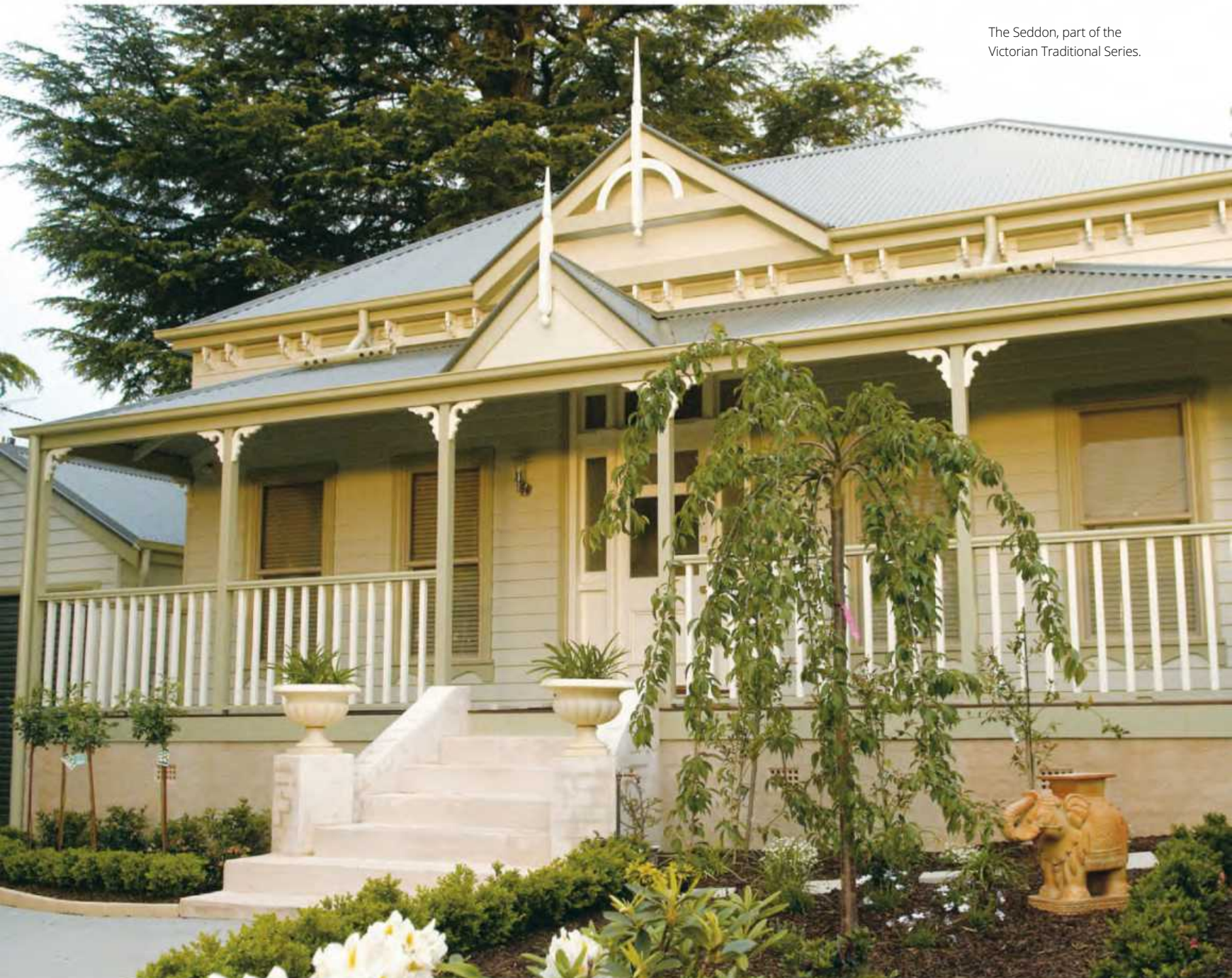
Floorplan of The Caulfield.

VICTORIAN TRADITIONAL SERIES

Pictured below is the Seddon, with a range of six different sizes and floorplans, from the Victorian Traditional Series. The \$109,942 deluxe lock-up package provides four bedrooms with built-in robes, a living room, family room, dining room, two bathrooms, a kitchen with walk-in pantry and laundry, across 204m² or 22 squares.

When it is built on a project-managed basis, construction takes 16 weeks. The fully stabilised, prefabricated wall frames and trusses are kiln-dried and termite-resistant. Full-frame erection is included, as is Colorbond roofing, Victorian hardware and fixings, Victorian ash windows and a choice of brick or weatherboard finishes.

Four different package options are available for an additional verandah and 3m ceilings. Timber-block front facade and assorted leadlights are other optional extras. Internal linings, plumbing, electrical, kitchen and floor are not included in the price.



The Seddon, part of the Victorian Traditional Series.

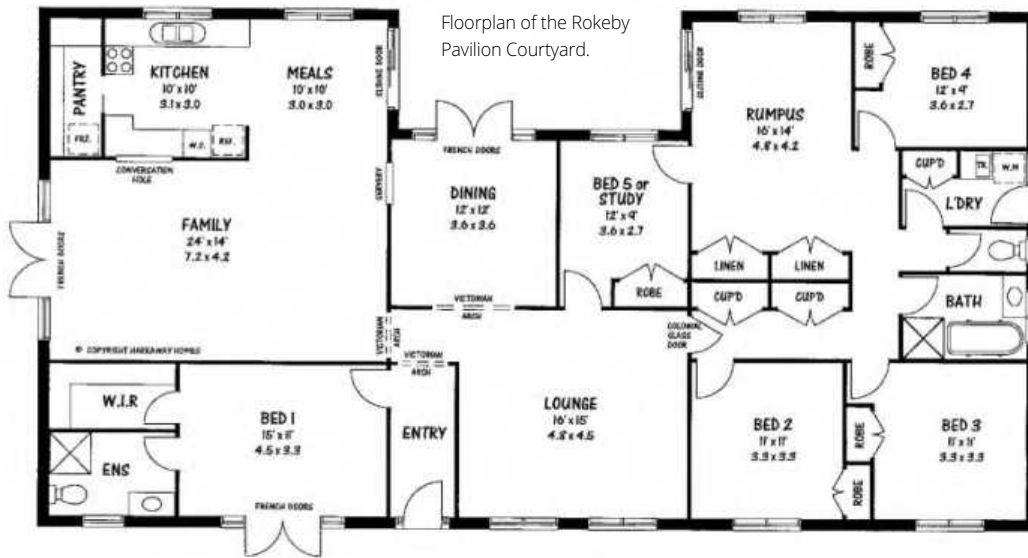
PAVILION ROOFLINE SERIES

Featured is the Rokeby Pavilion Courtyard, from a range of seven different sizes and floorplans. The 24-square, or 223m² home is priced at \$111,120 for the deluxe lock-up package. The home includes a family room, lounge room, dining room, rumpus room, kitchen with a walk-in pantry, two bathrooms and a laundry.

This authentic-reproduction Victorian home features a wide range of traditional features, including high exterior walls (12ft or 3.6m), a

period roofline, old-world cappings and finishes, high ceilings, casement windows and French doors. The home takes approximately 16 weeks to construct in either brick or weatherboard, with roofing of Colorbond or old-fashioned galvanised iron.

The home is enhanced with Victorian ash windows as well as Victorian dress accessories, hardware and fittings. Optional extras include a verandah, 10ft (3m) ceilings and assorted leadlights.



The Rokeby Pavilion Courtyard, part of the Pavilion Roof Series.



The Bowral, part of the Victorian Homestead series.





Featured above is the Bowral, from Harkaway Homes' newest range, the Victorian Homestead Series. The 298m², 32-square home is priced at \$154,781 for the deluxe lock-up package, including GST.

This design captures the best elements of yesteryear, with tall, external walls, high ceilings, leadlight-topped box-bay windows and French doors. The completely stabilised, prefabricated frames and trusses are kiln-dried and termite-

Optional extras include a verandah, three-metre ceilings and a feature entry-door frame. Internal linings, plumbing, electrical, kitchen and floor are not included in the price. ■

Website: harkawayhomes.com.au





A CLASS ACT

STORYBOOK DESIGNER HOMES HAS REACHED A NEW LEVEL OF EXCELLENCE WITH OUTSTANDING DESIGNS

Storybook Designer Homes was established more than 20 years ago and its team is dedicated to producing state-of-the-art, high-character design solutions at extremely competitive prices. Clients choose from traditional, classic, beach and modern styles and no matter what the building site — level, sloping, narrow, treed etc — Storybook will create a fabulous solution. Pictured are a few of the 2000 individual designs Storybook Designer Homes has created for owner-builder clients.

The process of individual design is not just about the floorplan and external shape of the

house; rather, it's the total desired impression inside and out. The company began by providing a product to satisfy the cottage and traditional market but quickly realised there was a huge need for more contemporary and coastal products. Today, Storybook is proud of both its designs and enthusiastic team.

"Our clients come to us with a vision of what they are hoping to create," says founder Phil Malcolm. "It's the driving force of our business to see that they receive it. However, total involvement and commitment from clients is also desired because only the clients have the detailed understanding of

the colours, textures and furnishings that will excite them. Our owner-builder system ensures this involvement and, therefore, the greater likelihood of success."

Storybook Designer Homes' services are available in most areas throughout Australia via the company's franchise network. ■

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Storybook Designer Homes
 Website: storybook.com.au

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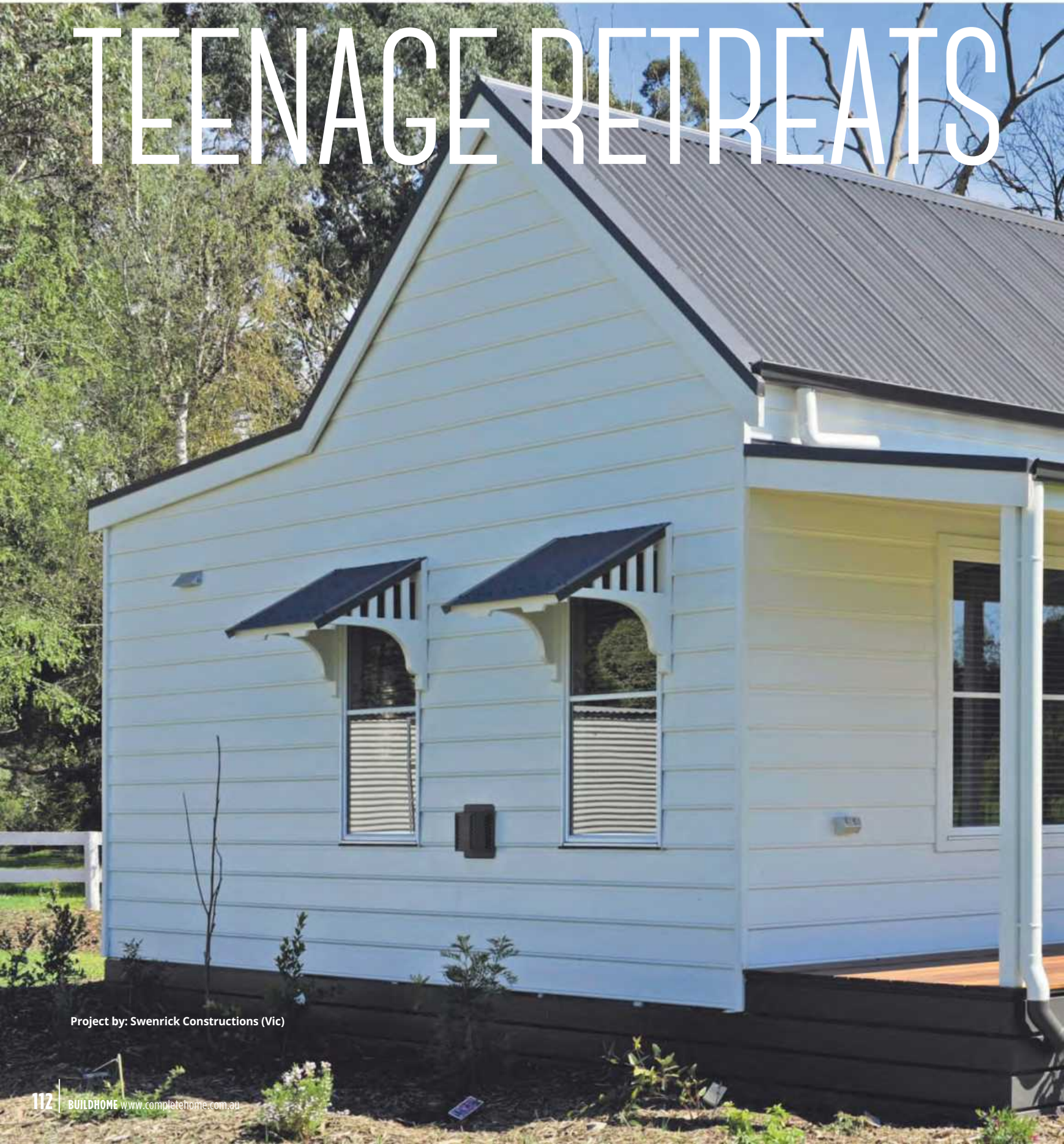


03



01 A Dream Home
designed by Storybook
Designer Homes.
02 State of the art
designer homes that are
full of character.
03 Storybook Homes'
services are available
in most areas across
Australia.

GRANNY FLATS & TEENAGE RETREATS



Project by: Swenrick Constructions (Vic)

HAVE THE FAMILY CLOSE WITHOUT COMPROMISING ON INDEPENDENCE BY CHOOSING A BEAUTIFUL GRANNY FLAT OR TEENAGE RETREAT

The nuclear family is changing and new living circumstances often require additions to the family home. Avoid the hassle and expense of extending an existing home by investing in a granny flat/ Dependent Person Unit (DPU). Whether you are looking to have elderly parents closer to home or are giving teenagers their own personal space, these affordable units are a perfect solution.

Units are designed for people of all ages, from young couples and singles to elderly parents or grandparents. They provide security and comfort

for the elderly as they are close to loved ones, where families can provide assistance if needed. Young people also find they are a great option if money is an issue, as they can be built at a low price and then moved when a block of land becomes affordable.

This section showcases the many design options available to find the granny flat (DPU), teenage retreat or detached dwelling that perfectly caters to the needs of your growing family, ensuring security and just enough independence.





01 Home by Swenrick Constructions (Vic).
02 Floorplan of the Lavender Cottage.
03 Floorplan of the Miners Cottage 1.

CUTE AND COSY

GRANNY FLATS, DEPENDENT PERSONS' UNITS AND SMALL COTTAGES

Swenrick Constructions is proud of its range of granny flats, dependent persons' units and cottages. Swenrick's granny flats are quaint, comfortable and well-appointed residences that contain the latest features and appliances. They are perfect for a retirement villa, backyard cottage or teenage retreat. Prices start from lock-up at \$25,975.

Swenrick has built more than 4000 projects throughout Victoria. The company's policy of design flexibility means clients can tailor plans to suit their own preferences, needs and budget. For your free brochure, call 03 8761 6610 or 5774 7066. Prices are subject to change without notice. ■

Swenrick Constructions (Vic)

7/4 Royan Place, Bayswater North Vic 3153

Phone: 03 8761 6610

Fax: 03 9728 8285

Open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

Email: sales@swenrick.com.au

Website: swenrick.com.au

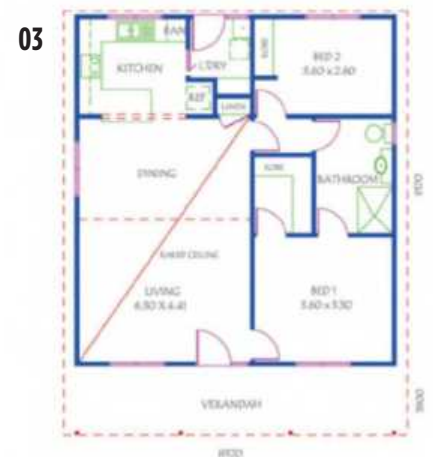
Display Homes: 7 Buxton-Marysville Road, Buxton Vic 3711

Phone: 03 5774 7066

Fax: 03 5774 7582

Mob: 0447 462 844

Open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm, Saturday and Sunday and most public holidays 12pm to 5pm.





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'Ocean View Special'



'Miners Cottage'



'Customised Woolamai'



'Ocean View'



'Selby Special Split Level'



'Warranwood On Display'

Swenrick building throughout Victoria for over 40 years to lock up or completion. Extensive experience building in high bushfire zones. Your design or ours.

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*Prices are subject to change.

For your free brochure please call (03) 8761 6610 or (03) 5774 7066

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p: 03 5774 7066 f: 03 5774 7582 m: 0447 462 844 e: sales@swenrick.com.au www.swenrick.com.au
WEEKDAYS from 9.00am to 5.00pm, WEEKENDS & most PUBLIC HOLIDAYS from 12.00pm to 5.00pm

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE 7/4 Royan Place, Bayswater North Vic 3153

p: (03) 8761 6610 f: (03) 9728 8285 WEEKDAYS from 9.00am to 5.00pm



www.swenrick.com.au



UNIQUE BUILDING PRODUCTS

MAKE YOUR PROPERTY YOUR OWN WITH UNIQUE BUILDING PRODUCTS

.....

There is an amazing selection of building products on the market these days that will help you build an energy-efficient home with great aesthetic appeal. The simple use of a unique building product can be the final touch to making your home extra-special.

Whether you are a city dweller or a country resident, there is a building product for you. Unique building products not only help to individualise your home and give it the look and feel you want, they also make the home more functional for your specific site needs.

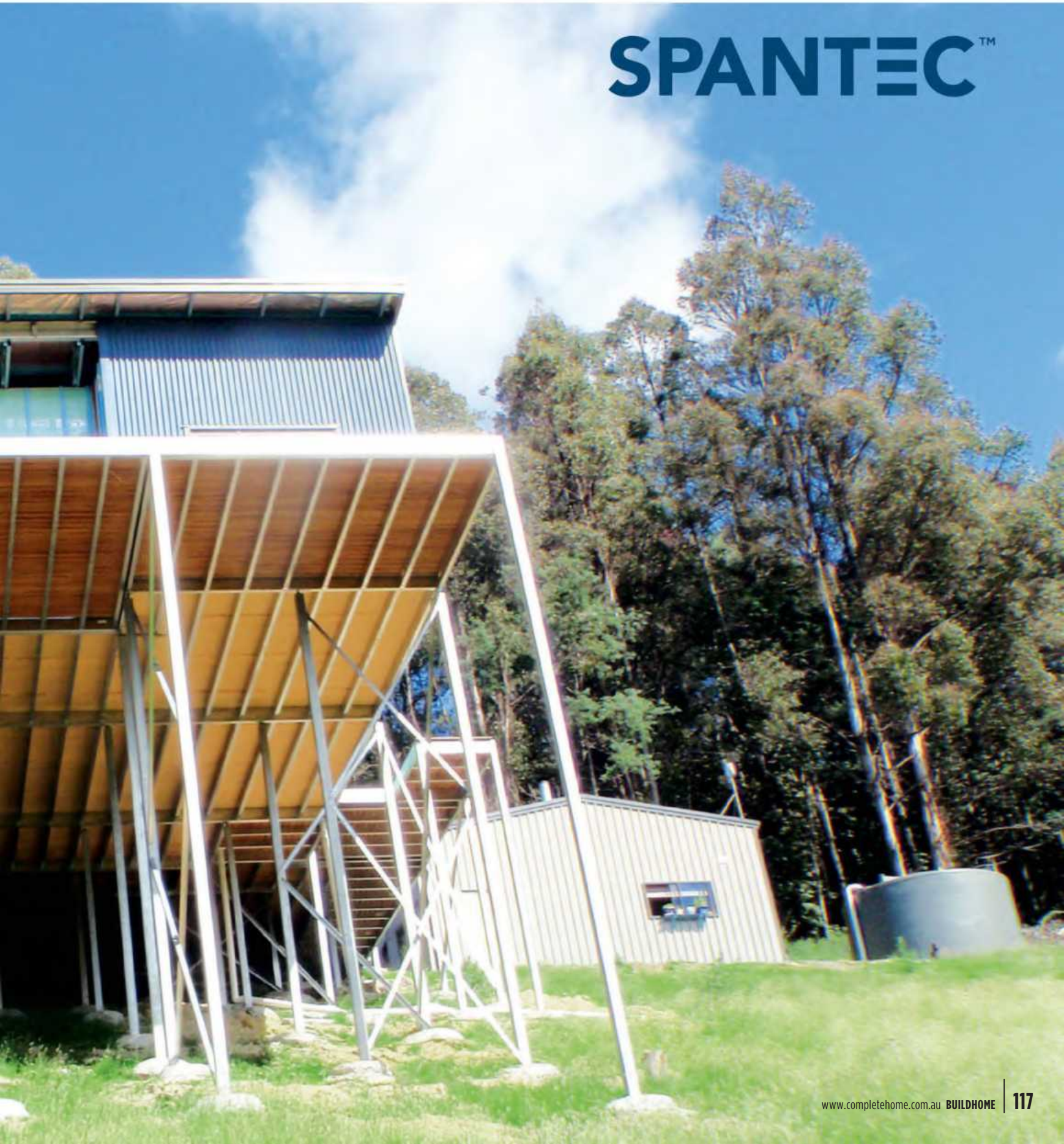
We live in a vast country with varying climates and environmental conditions, so no one building system will be the ideal solution for every place. Unique products allow you to create the home you need in the area you want. On the following pages, we spotlight a few companies that will put the finishing touches on your project and ensure that your home is durable enough to withstand the test of time.

.....

Sponsored by: Spantec Systems



SPANTEC™



MAKING BUILDING EASY

SPANTEC SYSTEMS GETS OWNER-BUILDERS OFF TO A GREAT START WITH ITS STEEL KIT FLOOR SYSTEM

Owner-builders Jason and Deborah Ahrens recently used the Boxspan sub-floor system, including the Ezi-Pier adjustable steel piers, supplied by Spantec, to build the floor frame for their dream home in Tasmania. Jason and Deborah made the move from north-eastern Victoria after falling in love with the picturesque landscapes of Tasmania during regular visits while preparing for working trips to Antarctica. A plumber by trade, Jason understood the importance of finding the best building materials to make his dream a reality.

Jason opted for a kit home from Blusteel Homes because he wanted to enjoy the experience of building his own home from scratch. The site is steep, overlooking an orchard, with distant views of the Derwent River and Port Arthur. The steep site presented no problem for the Boxspan flooring system, which eliminates the need for cutting, filling and compaction. This

means there is no need to repair the site with expensive landscaping and retaining walls, an often-overlooked cost in the building process.

"We always knew that we were going to use a Boxspan sub-floor system as I had helped my dad on a few Boxspan projects before," Jason says. "We knew the site was awkward to begin with but we loved the views. I had the surveyor mark out the 85 piers we needed to cope with the steep slope, with the highest piers being nearly 8m tall. I found it extremely easy and I would not hesitate to use the Boxspan sub-floor system again. I did virtually 95 per cent of the work on my own but I needed a mate to help with those 8m posts."

Installation of the Boxspan sub-floor system and the Ezi-Piers went smoothly, despite the challenges with delivery. "Deliveries were interesting too," Jason continues. "Blusteel Homes dropped off a truck trailer at Port Melbourne to be loaded onto the Spirit of Tasmania. The trailer was

then picked up by a freight company in Devonport and delivered to the site in time to meet up with the crane."

Boxspan steel floor framing is a high-quality sub-floor system that is lightweight and quick to install. The floor frames are designed and manufactured by Spantec Systems, ready to assemble. This allows owner-builders to get their dream home off to a flying start by easily overcoming the first challenge of constructing a sub-floor framing system.



01



02



Main: Boxspan steel flooring systems are ideal for sloping sites.
01 Jason saved on building costs by putting it together himself.
02 The floor is delivered to the site as a complete package.





The Boxspan system is strong yet very light. Being made from steel, it is non-combustible and termite-proof, which makes it ideal for building in the bush. If you are building in a bushfire zone, Spantec can help with the design, including meeting up to BAL40 classification. The company's extensive design knowledge is backed by fire tests conducted by the CSIRO in conjunction with the National Association of Steel Housing (NASH).

For Jason these added benefits became a necessity, making the Boxspan System the ideal building product. "Since we started the construction, new bush fire zoning has come into effect and, after coming back recently from Antarctica, I'm now completing the sub-floor area to finish off and comply with our BAL29 zone (classification)," Jason says. "In spite of the difficult site, the kit home from Blusteel Homes and the Spantec flooring and pier systems worked seamlessly together to create a strong and beautiful home."

COMPANY PROFILE

For more than 20 years, Spantec Systems has been designing steel flooring systems for builders and owner-builders, with the aim of making building as easy as possible.

Spantec uses your floorplans and designs the most efficient and economical flooring system for your requirements. The floor frame is delivered to the site as a complete kit, with all brackets and screws and detailed working drawings of how the components are assembled. All bearers and joists are cut to length and marked to match the working drawings, making the process very time efficient.

Boxspan "Smart Bearers" make assembly even easier, with pre-punched screw holes and printed joist numbers on the perimeter bearers making it simple to locate and fix the joist brackets, saving even more time on site.

The simplicity of the system has made it possible for owner-builders

to save money by putting it together themselves. Or, if they choose to use a builder, they still save due to the speed of installation.

Spantec walks you through the entire process. Design information includes detailed CAD drawings with state-of-the-art 3D models that allow you to "walk" through the frame on your computer. Because Spantec does the thinking for you, your floor system arrives on site as a complete kit, ready for installation.

Spantec Systems delivers to most areas Australia-wide. ■

Spantec Systems Pty Ltd

17 Drapers Road, Braemar, NSW 2575
Postal: PO Box 81, Mittagong NSW 2575
Phone: 02 4860 1000
Fax: 02 4872 1616
Email: sales@spantec.com.au
Website: spantec.com.au

03 Boxspan steel

flooring systems are non-combustible so they meet the bushfire attack levels (BAL) making them ideal for bushfire prone areas.

04 Spantec walks you


through the process of building your home to ensure the ultimate result.

05 Steel floor frames

are termite-proof and fire-resistant, making them an ideal alternative to timber.

06 Boxspan comes in a

range of sizes and gauges ensuring an economical beam selection can be found for every project.



Boxspan flooring system makes building easy on any site

BOXSPAN®

STEEL FLOORING SYSTEMS

The Boxspan steel flooring system is so quick and easy, it is just as popular with first time owner builders as it is with tradies.

Every Boxspan floor is individually designed, cut to size and labelled to match the working drawings. Just grab a screw gun and follow the plans. The latest innovation to the Boxspan floor system is the “Smart Bearer” which takes the meaning of “kit” to the next level. With pre-punched screw holes and printed joist numbers on the perimeter bearers, it’s a breeze to locate the joist brackets, saving even more time on site.

“I found it extremely easy and I would not hesitate to use the Boxspan sub-floor system again.”

Jason, Owner Builder, Neika Tasmania



The Boxspan steel flooring system is the modern alternative to timber bearers and joists:

- Strong, light and stable
- Rectangular shape and simple to use
- Won't twist, shrink or rot
- Non-combustible and termite proof

The Boxspan floor system is designed and manufactured by Spantec Systems. With over 20 years of experience, Spantec strive to make the best and easiest floor to assemble, making the first stage of your construction very easy.

THE SMART WAY TO BUILD

SAVE BIG ON BUILDING AND ENERGY
COSTS WHILE DOING YOUR BIT
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT WITH THIS
REMARKABLE BUILDING SYSTEM

This large, three-storey, 105-square home was built by Trevor and Megan Ryan on Phillip Island. It features many curved walls and is an excellent example of what can be achieved with the Thermacell building system.

Commercial builders are learning what many owner-builders have known for years — that Thermacell, the fire-retardant polystyrene formwork used for casting concrete structures, is the smartest, safest, easiest and most cost-effective way to build. After completing the home on Phillip Island, Trevor says he would recommend Thermacell. “I have

no hesitation in recommending Thermacell and I’ve done so to friends and other owner-builders. As owner-builders ourselves, we found Thermacell to be a fantastic building product. Its noise and insulation factors have proven to be better than expected.”

Thermacell blocks have keyways top and bottom and push together like Lego blocks. The flame-retardant and vermin-resistant blocks are hollow and filled with concrete, meaning the strength of a Thermacell building far exceeds that of any other type of building system.

Thermacell homes are virtually maintenance-free and the cost is comparable with brick veneer, but that’s where the comparison ends. Brick veneer and double brick cannot match the quality, strength, acoustics and insulation obtained by building with Thermacell. The reinforced concrete walls don’t expand or contract, meaning no expansion joints are necessary. The walls never move and no cracks ever appear in the plaster sheet on the inside of the walls.

External view of Trevor and Megan’s finished home.



SUPERIOR INSULATION AND EASY CONSTRUCTION

Thermacell provides your home with sound insulation between rooms and from noisy streets. And because of the superior insulation qualities, smaller heating systems are required and air-conditioning is seldom necessary. Energy savings can be about 50 per cent using Thermacell and up to 80 per cent using double-glazed windows when compared with the average uninsulated brick-veneer home.

Owner-builders with no previous building experience will find the product easy to work with and very cost-effective. "If you decide to mix and pour the concrete yourself, filling the blocks a couple of rows at a time, you won't need to brace the walls," says owner Geoff Bennett. "This will save you a lot of money, as hiring braces is a big additional cost. Thermacell can be pumped in one go, up to three metres in height at a time."

FIRE PROTECTION

Thermacell is a strong formwork made entirely from fire-retardant materials such as concrete, polystyrene and steel. Instead of a flammable timber frame, a steel-reinforced concrete core is used so that both the exterior and the interior walls are concrete-filled. Furthermore, the concrete core has no cavity, meaning there is no space for white ants to build nests or for fire to travel up to the ceiling.

To further protect the home from fire, the exterior can be rendered with acrylic cement render, which has an additional one-hour fire rating.

Owner and managing director Geoff Bennett explains that, for bushfire-prone areas, Thermacell's walls can be "battened and covered with a fireproof board such as Promat, making it unlikely that fire would ever penetrate the walls".

These materials and procedures used by Thermacell are especially utilised to make the home as fire-resistant as possible.

The system boasts up to eight times the strength of a standard brick veneer.





Polystyrene blocks are filled with concrete to guarantee long-term strength and insulation.

Owner-built, three-storey home.

COMPANY PROFILE

Thermacell has been in business for 30 years and boasts a faultless record. No home built out of Thermacell has ever failed. Owner and managing director Geoff Bennett likes to meet customers at his own Thermacell home in Somerville, which houses the head office and storage facility.

"We are happy to show customers our home and introduce them to all facets of our system," he says. "We can refer them to contractors if they wish to have their buildings built for them, or we can oversee owner-builders at their sites. We also provide a lot of advice over the

phone at all hours."

Trevor Ryan experienced Thermacell's exceptional customer service firsthand. "When we began the project, Geoff from Thermacell came down and delivered the blocks and helped us get started on using the Thermacell blocks. He also liaised with our engineer on numerous occasions," he relates.

This level of personalised service, combined with the reduced costs, ease of construction, environmental and cost-saving factors, means you can't go past Thermacell when building. The system is popular in Europe where it has been used since 1932,

and has many commercial applications including houses, commercial buildings, swimming pools, fences and retaining walls.

Visit the Thermacell website to learn more about the product that's revolutionising the building industry and letting Australian owner-builders create their dream homes. ■

Thermacell

PO Box 447, Somerville Vic 3912

Phone: 03 5977 7996

Email: info@thermacell.com.au

Website: thermacell.com.au



The smart way to build

Make big savings on building and energy costs while doing your bit for the environment with this remarkable building system.



THE ORIGINAL AND THE BEST



Scan our QR code and
discover Thermacell

CLADDING, COATING AND RENDERING

OFFERING GREAT VERSATILITY, FACADE SYSTEMS
ARE AN EXCELLENT WAY TO PERSONALISE AND
POLISH THE LOOK OF YOUR HOME



With flexible options to individualise your design, facade systems are a great way to transform your home. The materials used on the facade can make a great difference to how the home blends with its surroundings, be it a city street or a country retreat.

Experience and enjoy a fresh, new-look home without the hassle of moving or rebuilding. There are now many great choices

in colours and textures of facade systems to match perfectly with your home's existing style or to help give it a new look. Options such as brick, timber shingles, weatherboard, uPVC boards, stone, render, concrete, corrugated steel, blueboard and polystyrene cladding provide aesthetic appeal, plus various benefits for coping with the local climate.

Project by:
Hoobler Stone



ALL STACKED UP

IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT THE LONGEST-LASTING BUILDINGS THROUGHOUT HISTORY HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTED WITH STONE AND MORTAR. THESE MATERIALS HAVE PROVED THEMSELVES AGAINST CENTURIES OF NATURE'S HARSHTEST ASSAULTS AND ALL WITH LITTLE TO NO HUMAN MAINTENANCE. MODERN-DAY BRICKS AND PAVERS ARE JUST AS ENDURING, ECONOMICAL AND ENERGY-EFFICIENT; THEY ARE A SECURE AND SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT FOR YOUR CONSTRUCTION DOLLAR

Let's begin with a brick's composition. Made naturally in a kiln oven or dry press, they are composed of a variety of organic materials. They are weatherproof and require no ongoing maintenance or costly sealing products. Once laid, bricks are there to stay and therefore form the perfect framework for a sustainable and beautiful home.

A brick residence also stacks up as one of the most economical options for heating and cooling your home. Bricks have an excellent "thermal mass", meaning their core

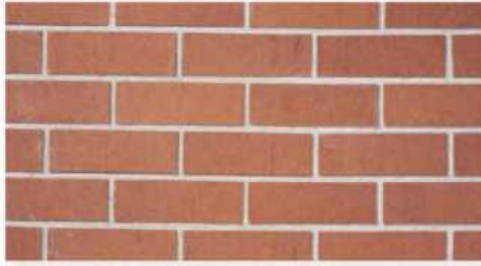
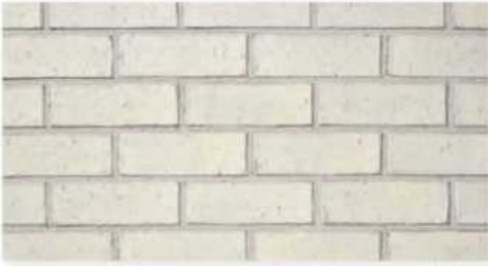
temperature rarely fluctuates even with major seasonal changes. Incorporating materials with inherent thermal mass into buildings reduces the reliance on mechanical heating and cooling additions. By using bricks, not only do you save on energy consumption but you also reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Bricks are also no longer just the practical option; an improvement in materials and manufacturing technology has seen brickwork flourish with creativity and design. Dry pressing, glazing, colour emulsions and metallic

and ceramic innovations have brought bricks and mortar into the domain of creativity — and quite literally they are there to stay.

According to Brett Ward from Austral Bricks, "Bricks are now widely recognised as a fashionable, stylish material that is available in modern, trending colours and textures. With over 200 colours to choose from, consumers have the power to create their own distinctive designs." Choice in textures is also vast and Brett suggests choosing different finishes to suit your desired design aesthetic.





3 TIPS FROM BRETT WARD

"It is important to consider all elements when making your selection, but start with the brick colour first as this is the most prominent facade. You must also understand the objective you want to achieve. Is it a traditional-style home, architecturally designed, contemporary or coastal?"

"The choice of mortar colour and finish can also play a very important role. The overall look of a home can be changed quite dramatically if using an off-white mortar compared to standard grey. Current trends are advocating the use of neutral brick colours for 90 per cent of the home's exterior, with the remaining 10 per cent being a dark feature colour such as grey or black for entranceways and porticos."

AUSTRAL BRICKS' DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- Design and build your home to suit local conditions.
- Build with bricks to take advantage of their natural heating and cooling properties.
- Incorporate bricks within the internal walls of your home to help control interior temperatures.





Image courtesy of Boral

03



04



05

FIVE REASONS TO CHOOSE BRICK

1. Durability: Bricks don't warp, twist, rot, rust or decay and therefore last a lifetime.
2. Low maintenance: There's no need to repaint, reseal or re-treat your bricks like other building materials. Apart from a clean every now and then, they are maintenance-free.
3. Thermal performance: Bricks have an excellent thermal mass; they keep the house cooler in summer and warmer in winter.
4. Sustainability: Because of their durability, low maintenance and excellent thermal performance, bricks are also a sustainable choice. Once laid, they are literally there for a lifetime and have no residual impact on the environment.
5. Design flexibility: With an almost infinite number of textures, colours and shape options, bricks offer a unique design element for builders and renovators.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR THOSE CONSIDERING PAVERS

There is a very wide range of pavers available on the current market which includes stone, concrete and clay. Because stone and clay pavers won't fade over time, they will maintain their good looks and durability forever.

In addition to the types of materials used in pavers, there is also a number of sizes from small format to large format. If you are looking to make a small area look larger, use a large-format paver to create a feeling of openness.

Shopping list

- Boral Building Materials, boral.com.au
- Austral Bricks, australbricks.com

Images courtesy of Concrete Masonry Association of Australia cmaa.com.au, thinkbrick.com.au

Main: Bricks and pavers are major features of this beautiful home.

02 Shown here are some exterior choices for textures in Thrown, Slurried, Rolled, Wirecut, Tumbled and Hewn finishes.

03 Pavers are a great addition to exterior areas. They create comfortable spaces for people to gather and enjoy the outdoors. Shown are Bradstone Cobbles from Boral.

04 The uniformity of bricks contrasts well with pitched roofs and interesting timber angles.

05 This residence in Five Dock, Sydney, has used brick as a feature of the home rather than for a purely structural purpose.

BUILDING BASICS

THE LATEST BUILDING ESSENTIALS PLUS A FEW OTHER LUXURIES TO MAKE YOUR HOME YOUR OWN



01

01 PGH Bricks & Pavers has introduced a new collection of exclusively designed and highly desirable house bricks — the Dry Pressed. The range is available in an assortment of nine tones and features a grainy, yet smooth and velvety appearance perfect for any new home. Like all PGH bricks, the new Dry Pressed range is sustainable, energy-efficient, low maintenance, strong, and a cost-effective solution for your home build. For more information, visit pghbricks.com.au



04

04 Keep the noise down with CSR Hebel's innovative PowerFloor system. A highly versatile solid flooring system, PowerFloor provides the feel of a concrete floor at a significantly lower cost. Installed over conventional joists, the thick panels fit snugly together to form a strong, smooth floor and are simple and fast to install, meaning no delays to your building schedule. For more information, visit hebel.com.au

05 Restore rusty metal and bring back some shine in only hours with Hammerite Rust Remover Gel. Specially developed for the safe and effective removal of rust from vertical surfaces and intricate metal items, Hammerite Rust Remover is available in both gel and dip formulations. For more information, visit hammerite.com.au

05



07

07 Small-scale improvements are a great way to update the look and feel of a home at a relatively low cost and with minimal disruption to the living environment. As featured on the 2015 season of *The Block*, CSR Gyprock has proven plasterboard is a great way to create bulkheads, niches and recesses which add architectural interest as well as providing handy storage areas or hiding unsightly wires and cables. For more information, visit gyprock.com.au



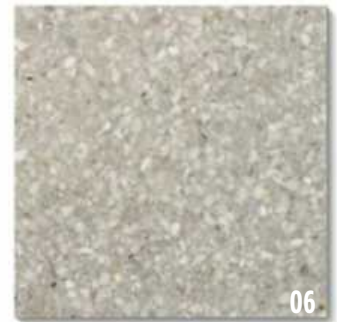
03

03 Timber continues to be a favourite when it comes to building our homes, and leading woodcare company Intergrain is making it easier to visualise your ideal look with its new iPhone app. Aiming to bridge the gap between DIYers and professionals, the app's visualiser technology allows consumers to capture their own project surface using an iPhone or by selecting a timber type from a range of finishes to visualise the finished result. For more information, visit intergrain.com.au



02

02 As spring rolls around, getting the house ready for outdoor living and entertaining becomes a priority. The quickest and easiest way to clean your home is to use a pressure washer to blast away any moss and mould that has crept onto the driveway, courtyard, walls and verandahs. Briggs & Stratton's pressure washer range is the perfect solution to get your home ready for the entertaining season. For more information, visit briggsandstratton.com.au



06

06 Fibonacci Stone has released the new steel and pewter terrazzo tiles to its range. Inspired by the popularity of Brutalist architecture which was evident from the 1950s to the mid-1970s, the tiles encompass the colours and textures used by the artists, architects and designers of this era. The tiles are ideal for both residential and commercial flooring applications as they possess a high slip resistance, require minimal ongoing maintenance and have a lifespan of more than 30 years. For more information, visit fibonaccistone.com.au



08

08 Create a seamless transition between the interior and exterior of the home with Paarhammer Giant Sliders. Unmatched in size, strength and security when compared to other window manufacturers in Australia, Paarhammer Giant Sliders are the must-have addition to any new home. For more information, visit paarhammer.com.au

Photography by Peter Hyatt

BEAUTIFUL, TIMELESS, ACHIEVABLE

PROTECTING HOMES IN BUSHFIRE-PRONE AREAS

Building with stone has never been more achievable or affordable than it is with Hoobler Stone, a reconstituted stone veneer.

In production for more than 40 years, and compliant with the new Victorian building regulations for BALs (Bushfire Attack Levels), Hoobler Stone has earned respect within the building and landscaping industries for its “natural” look and ability to weather the harsh Australian climate.

Hoobler Stone is a cement-based product made in moulds cast from natural stone. Hundreds of different shapes are produced in a variety of textures and colours, creating a classic and contemporary range to suit many architectural styles. It's strong, colour-fast and maintenance-free.

The stone can be applied to almost any type of wall surface, including timber, brick, concrete or fibro. Each piece of stone is randomly fixed into a mortar bed to create the appearance of solid stone construction. And because the stone is flat-backed and applied without ties or special footings, there is greater freedom of design than when using heavier natural stone.

An ideal cladding for domestic, commercial and industrial buildings, Hoobler Stone will add character and individuality to apartments, townhouses, new homes, resorts, hotels, office complexes, shopping centres, aged-care facilities, factories, wineries and restaurants.

For exterior walls, Hoobler Stone makes a striking feature on pillars, entertaining areas, garden sheds, water features, fences and gateposts, and provides a unique look to internal feature walls and fireplaces.

A weatherboard home can easily be converted into a charming stone cottage, a brick home given a new lease on life, or a home extension blended seamlessly with the original building.

Foundation stones in bluestone and sandstone, perfect for period home renovations, are available in a range of sizes, either regular or chisel-edged.

Paving stones are cast with a non-slip, flat surface ideal for swimming pool and spa surrounds, garden paths, driveways and other landscaping projects.

In addition, capping stones and quoins can be made to order, with adhesive and sealer readily available to complete the job.





COMPANY PROFILE

Hoobler Stone originated in California in the 1940s, when Ken Hoobler developed his method of producing cast stone. Exclusive licensing rights for the manufacture and distribution of Hoobler Stone in Australia were negotiated in the early 1970s. In 2004, John and Deb Duckworth took over the business, moving the manufacturing plant to Geelong. With many years of experience in the building industry, John and Deb have introduced a variety of new stones into the range and aim to exceed client expectations by ensuring a hassle-free process from initial enquiry to project completion.

The service includes a free quote, technical advice and support, and even shopping around for the cheapest freight to anywhere in Australia or the South Pacific.

Independent contractors can be recommended to provide an obligation-free quote to lay the stone, or instructions provided for DIY projects.

Hoobler Stone is committed to high-quality products, timely delivery and outstanding customer service. ■

Hoobler Stone**New Factory and Showroom:**

42 Buckley Grove,

Moolap, Geelong Vic 3224

Postal address: PO Box 102,
Torquay Vic 3228

Phone: 03 5248 6988

Fax: 03 5248 6944

Mobile: 0409 160 262

Email: info@hooblerstone.com.au

Website: hooblerstone.com.au

Main: Burnt Umber

Stone adds lasting character to any project.

02 Capturing the golden

tones of natural stone found in Central Victoria, the Goldfields Stone can be laid as a stack stone or with a mortar joint.

03 A beautiful cottage

in Drouin featuring Colonial Brown Stone.

04 Inspired by the

beautiful Mt Hotham, the appropriately named Hotham Stone features a rich, smooth look.



02





Hoobler Stone



Distributors
Needed
Australia
Wide

- Hoobler Stone is produced in moulds cast from natural stone
- Each stone is flat-backed, light-weight and easy to apply
- No special ties or footings are required
- Great range of colours, textures and shapes
- Colour-fast, weather proof and maintenance free
- Can be colour matched to suit special requirements
- Hoobler Stone is more cost effective than using natural stone
- Products have proven their quality and durability with the test of time
- Proudly Australian made and owned since the early 1970's

www.hooblerstone.com.au

FOR NORTHERN NSW / QLD ENQUIRIES

Contact: Becc & Marty Wakeham
Beaches Bricklaying

T: 02 6672 6717 / M: 0416 200 225
beachesbricklaying@bigpond.com

FOR CANBERRA ENQUIRIES

Contact: Katherine Dale
Randal Homes

M: 0408 695 650
katherine.dale@randalhomes.com.au

WATER-SAVING SOLUTIONS

BEING WATER-WISE WILL SAVE YOU MONEY AS WELL AS OUR MOST PRECIOUS RESOURCE

Blisteringly hot and dry summers have become all too common in Australia, with one of the nation's most valuable resources pushed to the brink. Water is vital to our survival, yet it continues to be treated as an expendable commodity; the average household uses 180,000L of water per year.

As the population continues to increase, water supplies are progressively under pressure. It is therefore more important than ever that Australian households incorporate water-saving solutions in their homes.

We spoke to Michael Smit, national programs manager from the savewater! Alliance, about how Australian homes can incorporate water-saving systems into their building design.

RAINWATER HARVESTING

The rainwater harvesting system is one of the most popular water-saving solutions used by Australians, with 26 per cent of the population having already installed a water tank. Essentially, rainwater harvesting is the collection of water that flows from the roofs of buildings, which is then stored for later use.

The benefits are plentiful as rainwater is a free water supply unaffected by water restrictions and it falls right where you need it. Many modern homes currently utilise rainwater harvesting systems for basic appliances such as washing machines, garden watering and flushing toilets. The water is often good enough to drink, with more than two million Australians drinking rainwater every day.

A tank can save up to 90,000L each year, almost half the average household consumption. This, in turn, can also mean some great financial savings to the household budget. The amount of water saved largely depends on a few factors including climate, design and usage. As the system relies on rainfall, it is most suited to areas which experience frequent and consistent rainfall such as Melbourne and Sydney.

Design also plays an important role when it comes to water collection. "Most people think about the rainwater tank, but the best outcomes are achieved if you think about the entire rainwater harvesting system including the roof, gutters, downpipes, occupants, tanks, pumps and the wider environment," says Michael.

Including a tank in the initial design of your home is ideal, adds Michael, as this will ensure the system is properly connected from top to bottom. Although roof area and the size of the tank need to be considered, the most important factor for rainwater yield is the number of connected appliances; a 1000L tank can deliver more benefit than a 10,000L tank if it is connected to more appliances like toilets and washing machines. Costs associated with a rainwater harvesting system apply only to initial installation, running expenses and maintenance.

Tanks don't have to be an unsightly addition to your home design as they can easily be stored out of sight under decks or the ground, or hidden in backyard nooks. Before installing a tank, make sure you assess the surrounding



- 01 Water tanks, such as the inground b pump change** by Polymaster, can be stored underground.
- 02 Clear overhanging foliage** to keep gutters free from blockages.
- 03 The best results** are achieved when the complete system is connected from top to bottom.
- 04 The need for** households to incorporate water-saving solutions in the home is more important than ever.
- 05 Underground rainwater tank** by Polymaster.



04

area. Clear overhanging foliage and gutters as this will dirty the water and cause blockages to water flow into the tank.

SUPPLIERS

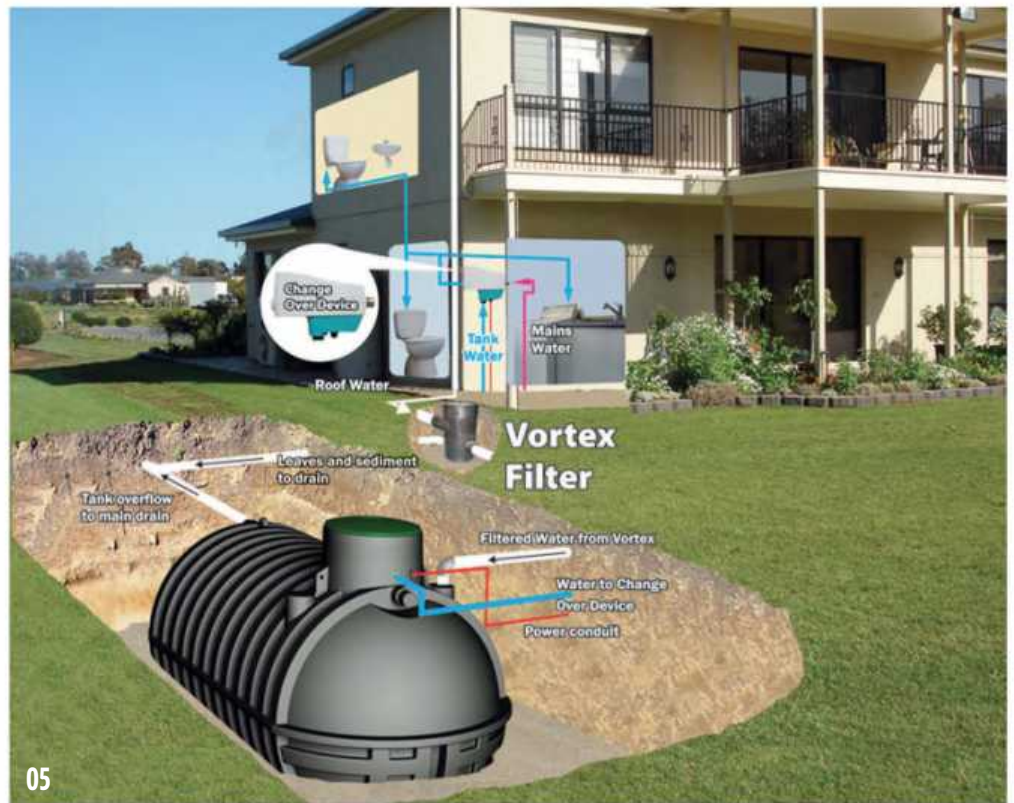
Polymaster is a leading supplier of rainwater tanks in Australia, with more than 20 years of experience in the industry. Polymaster provides a certified, patented, one-piece design with a 20-year warranty, giving you peace of mind that the product you purchase will stand the test of time.

With a wide range of sizes and comprehensive colour range, Polymaster has a tank and pump options that will seamlessly blend with your home while providing you with one of the best water-saving solutions around.

The company offers a fast and simple installation process to help you achieve a 6-star energy rating as quickly as possible. "Tanks are suitable for nearly every home," says Polymaster's national sales manager. "The water tanks are designed to hold a maximum volume of water for a minimum surface area. Rainwater tanks provide the best environmental solutions to saving water." Polymaster offers free delivery to selected states and areas in Australia.

GREYWATER

Greywater is a clever and easy water-saving solution for those who can't invest in a water tank. Typically, greywater is defined as household waste water derived from the shower and laundry, which can be reused later. "Benefits are reliability of supply. Regardless of rainfall, greywater is produced from residential uses such as showering and



clothes washing," says Michael. Greywater is also unaffected by water restrictions and is therefore great for dry areas.

The volume of water you can use is dependent on your personal behaviour and climate. "A shower should reliably provide about 50L of water each day, while a top-loading washing machine will provide over 100L (front loading less than half)," says Michael.

Costs vary with the quality of the greywater system in place. They range from simple, direct-diversion types for reuse on gardens, to advanced treatments for supplying water for toilets and washing machines. Investing in a good system is paramount as a low-grade system will cause damage to your garden and pose health risks. Systems must treat water within the first 24 hours of water catchment as water will quickly go septic after this time.

If you choose to use this technique, Michael advises using water only from the shower and laundry as toilet and kitchen water is illegal and too greasy for reuse of any kind. "Prolonged exposure to greywater will reduce soil quality unless care is taken with detergents and cleaning products," advises Michael. Choose environmentally friendly products to help ensure the water is as pure as possible. Normal washing powders often include salt "fillers" and can destroy soil quality. Instead, opt for liquid detergents. Visit GreySmart for more information.

Greywater systems are best designed during the building process of your home, or simple diversion hoses can be installed to already-complete homes.

RECYCLED WATER

A relatively new option for metropolitan suburbs, this system is known for its distinctive purple pipes which provide water within residential homes. "Recycled water is treated water from sewage treatment plants," says Michael. The water is generally used for landscaping purposes. Benefits of this system include the recycling of a water product, often cheap supply and reliability of supply. The system is also unaffected by water restrictions and is great for dry, rural areas.

Costs incurred revolve around high infrastructure expenses for water suppliers through providing a third pipe system in addition to the existing potable water and sewage water pipework. "It's a good option if it is available in your area," says Michael. Actual costs for individuals involve additional plumbing costs and the water itself (approximately 50-90 per cent of the cost of potable water).



The savewater! Alliance is a not-for-profit industry association that works with member water businesses, government agencies, and product and technology providers to deliver a range of outcomes across water conservations and efficiency, water products and initiatives, as well as product and technology solutions. For more information on how to save water visit savewater.com.au



FIGHTING FIRE

KEEP YOUR HOME
AND FAMILY SAFE
THIS SEASON

The State of Victoria has long been plagued by bushfires. The region's natural topography, vegetation and climate create the ideal conditions for bushfires, which have often resulted in devastation.

In 2009, the Black Saturday Bushfires burnt through more than 1,100,000 acres of land and destroyed more than 2100 properties across Victoria, costing the state \$4.4 billion. Due to the unprecedented intensity of the fires, nothing could have saved or prevented such a great loss of homes, however a minimum construction Standard (Australian Standard 3959-2009) was later implemented in an attempt to improve the ability of a building to withstand a bushfire or ember attack.

Victorian Building Authority (VBA) director of technical and regulation, Jarrod Edwards, says that due to the unpredictable nature, behaviour and intensity of bushfires, there is no guarantee a building can withstand such a disaster. However, by building under the new construction Standard you can provide your family and home with a better chance of survival.

FIVE STRATEGIES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF BUSHFIRE DAMAGE:

- 1 Choose an appropriate building site location
- 2 Use non-combustible or bushfire-resistant building materials
- 3 Ensure close proximity to independent water resources
- 4 Arrange to have bushfire water spray or external water sprinkler systems installed
- 5 Manage the surrounding vegetation and clear the site of debris

BEFORE BUILDING YOUR HOME

When planning to build your new home in a designated bushfire-prone area it is important that you consult a building surveyor early on so the Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) can be identified. The BAL determines the construction methods that must be used to meet the Standard.

"The construction requirements of the Standard take into account a range of factors, including the Fire Danger Index, land slope and types of surrounding vegetation and its proximity to the building," says Jarrod.

"You can talk with your building surveyor or search online for a local BAL assessor. The VBA recommends that you ensure the person carrying out the assessment has the appropriate knowledge and experience to do the job properly."

LOCATION

The location of a home is vital to the prevention of bushfire damage. The Victorian government has developed Bushfire Prone Area (BPA) maps to assist homeowners in determining whether a BAL assessment is required. The map is based on the level of bushfire threat an area is in and can be a useful tool for homeowners who are planning to build a new home. All new homes in a BPA must be built to a minimum of BAL 12.5, unless an assessment of the site determines a higher BAL.

To view the BPA maps, visit the mapping service online at www.land.vic.gov.au.

MATERIALS

The Standard requires the use of building materials appropriate for your Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) to help reduce the risk of



damage to homes in the event of a bushfire. Common non-combustible materials used in construction include steel, concrete, brick and cement sheet. These materials are provided for under the Standard for most BALs.

Apart from non-combustible materials, bushfire-resistant timbers may also be used in buildings.

RETROFIT YOUR HOME

The Country Fire Authority (CFA) and the VBA have developed a guide for homeowners who are rebuilding or renovating their homes for increased protection against bushfires. As homes built in BPAs often predate the new construction Standard, retrofitting your home can be the affordable way to protect your home if you're not considering a total rebuild.

Although the bushfire building regulations do not include mandatory retrofitting, Jarrod says it is a decision that every homeowner should make. "Take into consideration recent events, the current level of protection and the location and home site (when deciding whether or not to retrofit your home)."

The cost will vary depending on the associated BAL in the area and the materials you choose to use. Improvements such as

installing shutters or metal flyscreens to doors and windows, and replacing walls, roof or floor materials with non-combustible or bushfire-resistant materials can make the difference between your home withstanding a bushfire or being left with nothing at all. A detailed guide on retrofitting your home can be found on the CFA website at www.cfa.vic.gov.au. ■



The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) is the regulator of the building and plumbing industries in Victoria.

Information is available on the VBA website to provide homeowners with an overview of the building requirements in bushfire-prone areas. Homeowners who would like to know more about the bushfire Standard and how it will affect them should talk with their builder in the first instance. For further information they can contact the VBA on 1300 815 127.

Words: Sunny Liu

BAL

The Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) is a means of measuring the severity of a building's potential exposure to ember attack, radiant heat and direct flame contact. The BAL identifies the required methods of construction to meet the Standard. This includes factors such as the Fire Danger Index, land slope and types of surrounding vegetation and its proximity to the building. Property owners can find a local BAL assessor by talking to their building surveyor or searching online. The VBA recommends that homeowners ensure the assessor has the appropriate knowledge and experience to do the job properly.

There are six BAL categories that range from low to extreme risk:

- BAL — LOW
- BAL — 12.5
- BAL — 19
- BAL — 29
- BAL — 40
- BAL — FZ (Flame Zone)





THE ESSENTIAL NEW-HOME BUILDERS' CHECKLIST

THERE IS SO MUCH TO THINK ABOUT WHEN BUILDING A NEW HOME. USE THIS LIST TO CHECK OFF IMPORTANT ITEMS TO ENSURE THE BUILDING PROCESS IS A SMOOTH ONE

WHAT CAN YOU AFFORD?

- ☐ Have you calculated your total budget, including legal fees, the cost of the land, land evaluation fees, rates and taxes, stamp duty, site works, landscaping and moving expenses?
- ☐ Do you qualify for finance and, if so, how much are you able to borrow? Find out if a bank, building society, mortgage broker or an independent financial adviser is the best option for you. The Australian Securities and Investment Commission consumer website, www.moneysmart.gov.au, is a great resource for people who need more information or advice about home loans.
- ☐ Have you allowed an extra 15 per cent to cover any unplanned additional expenses such as price increases or changes to your plans after building has commenced?
- ☐ Are you eligible for any financial assistance from the government to build your new home, such as the First Home Owner Grant scheme (all states), the First Home Bonus (Vic), or benefits for building in regional areas (Vic and Qld)? To find out whether you can take advantage of these benefits, contact the sro.vic.gov.au

CHOOSING LAND

- ☐ Does the area you have chosen to build on meet the needs of your family? Ensure you find out about schools, transport, shops, doctors, dentists etc.

- ☐ Have you checked with the Land Titles Office to find out if the land has any encumbrances, easements or restrictive covenants, or whether there's likely to be any delay in subdivision approvals that might prevent the builder lodging plans with the local authority?
- ☐ Check with the local authority to see if there are any future subdivisions, road changes or any special building conditions that apply, such as designated bushfire-prone areas, land liable to flooding and designated termite-risk areas, or planning overlays such as the Bushfire Management overlay.
- ☐ If it's a strata-title block, have you checked with the local authority to see whether there are any special building requirements?
- ☐ Are you informed about the availability of gas, water, sewerage, electricity and the National Broadband Network?
- ☐ Are you fully aware of the extent of site works needed (such as tree removal, levelling, retaining walls, removal of clay or rocks, extra drainage etc)?

GETTING READY TO BUILD

- ☐ Develop a simple filing system to keep track of the building process.
- ☐ Think about what features are must-haves and what's on your wish list. This will ensure your new home suits your needs, desires and lifestyle.

- ☐ Visit a few display homes, kit homes and custom-designed homes to gauge the different options and to clarify special offers.
- ☐ If buying a display home, have you checked that the model you are purchasing includes all the features you expect? Remember to check the contract and specifications.
- ☐ Do you fully understand what is — or is not — included in the price? Make sure you have everything in writing, including features such as driveways, fencing, hot water services, light fittings etc.
- ☐ Are you happy with the type and dimensions of the materials used, such as the thickness of the wall slabs, type of brick on the inside walls, roof framing, roof tiles, wall plaster or finish? Ask an independent expert for an opinion.
- ☐ Do your research before choosing a builder. Ask friends and family for recommendations, contact industry associations such as the Master Builders Association (MBA) or Housing Industry Association (HIA) for a list of reputable builders, or search trade directories. Be sure to ask for at least three quotes from different builders, see examples of their work, and try to speak with past clients.
- ☐ Check with your relevant state body to ensure your chosen builder is properly licensed: NSW Fair Trading, the Queensland

Building and Construction Commission (QBCC) or the Victorian Building Authority.

☐ Have you considered appointing a building lawyer to help prevent any misunderstandings by making your contract clear before you sign? The Law Institute of Victoria has a referral service at liv.asn.au

CHECKING YOUR PLANS

☐ Check all the plans and specifications thoroughly. Make sure you fully understand the plans and all the symbols used. If plans are drawn up in advance of a building contract, check with your relevant building surveyor that they will be approved without major amendments.

☐ If you have chosen a display home, take the plans along and check the features, measurements of rooms and furniture installed. Check that any changes or extras are included. You have rights to ensure that the house you contract for is of the same quality of workmanship as the display home that you viewed. Visit Consumer Affairs Victoria's website consumer.vic.gov.au/building for more information.

☐ Ensure all your selected materials and design changes are included in the drawings and/or specifications. Variations made after the contract is signed may incur a fee.

☐ Check that your plans comply with Victoria's six-star standard.

BEFORE YOU SIGN THE BUILDING CONTRACT

☐ Read, check and make sure you understand all contract documents thoroughly. Insist on using a recognised form of building contract, such as those published by the Housing Industry Association or the Master Builders Association. Consumer Affairs Victoria also has a free model domestic building contract you can use when planning to build a new home, which balances the rights and obligations of the consumer and builder. If you don't understand any part of the documents, ask questions and seek your own legal advice. Contracts can be amended to make it clear regarding what was agreed between the parties. Remember, rights such as implied warranties and other rights under the *Domestic Building Contracts Act 1995* cannot be signed away.

☐ Has the builder confirmed that they have obtained and reviewed the foundation data?

☐ Does the contract require the release of progress payments at the standard stages of construction? Under Victorian law, you pay a specific amount for each completed stage of building including base, frame, lock-up and fixing. There is also a limit on the deposit amount that your builder can request. If your

builder has suggested different payments, ensure you get legal advice before deciding.

☐ Do you intend to provide any materials for your home, such as a spa, kitchen equipment or light fittings? If so, have you checked whether the builder's public liability insurance covers the loss or theft of these materials from the site or damage after installation?

☐ Have you checked the dates or time periods that the fixed contract is scheduled to start and finish? Establish what your rights and the builder's rights are if the builder runs over the original contract construction time.

☐ Have you filled in the liquidated damages clause? Is the amount sufficient to cover your losses if the home is not finished on time? Take into account the cost of rent, storage and other out-of-pocket expenses.

☐ For more information regarding contracts, visit Consumer Affairs Victoria's website consumer.vic.gov.au/building or call 1300 558 181.

BEFORE CONSTRUCTION STARTS

☐ Confirm that a building permit has been issued by the relevant building surveyor for your project.

☐ Have you checked that the approved plans issued with the building permit are consistent with the plans agreed to in the domestic building contract?

☐ As part of the contract, choose either to elect for the building practitioner to engage the relevant building surveyor or seek and appoint your own relevant building surveyor.

☐ In the instance where the building practitioner engages the relevant building surveyor, ensure you receive a copy of the building permit.

☐ Has signage with the details of the builder and relevant building surveyor been placed in a prominent position at the front of the site?

☐ Make certain that the building is sited correctly and in accordance with the approved plans. One way to guarantee this is to have a site survey carried out by a licensed land surveyor, to check that the title boundaries are in the correct position.

ONCE CONSTRUCTION STARTS

☐ Have you been given the name and phone number of your contact person in the builder's office?

☐ Purchase a diary to record all the day-to-day happenings, including discussions with your builder.

☐ Have you organised to confirm all important agreements or comments in writing throughout the entire building period?

☐ Ensure you have received a claim from the builder for a progress payment. Carefully

check that the work is properly completed up to the appropriate stage.

☐ Ensure that any variations from the approved plans and contract are approved prior to the work being undertaken. Some variations may require the approval of the relevant building surveyor.

☐ Has your builder advised you if the home is complete in accordance with the approved plans and specifications, and given you an occupancy permit or a certificate of final inspection? Check every aspect to ensure you are satisfied and the home is habitable and the building work is completed. You can then hand over the final payment. Remember that you have made a financial commitment to your builder to pay in accordance with the conditions of the contract.

MOVING IN

☐ Arrange connection of the telephone (you can organise for cabling to be carried out during construction), gas and electricity.

☐ Advise the water authority, local council and post office that you have moved.

☐ Notify the electoral office, bank, employer, Medicare, insurance companies, roads and traffic authority, schools and professional associations.

☐ Make a note of any minor defects and arrange to provide a list to the builder.

Your relationship with your builder is like any other business relationship. It carries certain roles and responsibilities, and as a consumer it is important to know where to go if problems arise. Building Advice and Conciliation Victoria (BACV) helps consumers and builders resolve and prevent building disputes. Contact the BACV on 1300 557 559 for free advice and assistance. However, you should try to resolve any problems or disputes with your builder in the first instance. ■

WANT MORE INFORMATION ON:

GOVERNMENT BENEFITS FOR NEW-HOME BUILDERS

State Revenue Office Victoria

Phone: 13 21 61

Website: sro.vic.gov.au

FINDING A BUILDER

Master Builders Association of Victoria

Phone: 03 9411 4555

Website: mbav.com.au

UNDERSTANDING YOUR RIGHTS AND GENERAL ADVICE

Consumer Affairs Victoria

Phone: 1300 558 181

Website: consumer.vic.gov.au/building

Victorian Building Authority

Phone: 1300 815 127

Website: buildingcommission.com.au



CONTRACT CHECKLIST

CONTRACTS ARE LEGALLY BINDING SO IT'S IMPORTANT TO GET THEM RIGHT. USE THIS CHECKLIST TO ENSURE YOUR BUILDING CONTRACT CONTAINS ALL THE NECESSARY ELEMENTS

A building contract is an important legal document that forms an agreement between a builder and a consumer regarding domestic building work. As each state and territory in Australia has its own building authority, building contract laws vary from state to state. In New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, legal requirements for these contracts are set out in the *Home Building Act 1989*, the *Domestic Building Contracts Act 2000*, and the *Domestic Building Contracts Act 1995*, respectively. Regardless of where you're building your new home, a contract is required if the total cost of work exceeds

a certain amount. In New South Wales, builders must supply their clients with a written contract if a job costs more than \$1000 (including labour and materials). This amount is set at \$3300 in Queensland and \$5000 in Victoria.

By law, contracts must contain a checklist of the following items. A caution about signing the contract must be included if "yes" cannot be answered to all items on the checklist. You should also consider seeking legal advice from a solicitor who specialises in home building matters before you sign on the dotted line.



☐ Does the builder hold a current builder's licence or registration certificate? If so, does it cover the type of work outlined in the contract? You should only deal with a builder or tradesperson who is licensed by Victoria's Building Commission.

☐ Do the name and number on the builder's licence or registration certificate match those on the contract? Building contracts must also contain your name and address, the signatures of both parties and the date the contract was signed.

☐ Are you aware of who is to obtain any council and other approvals of the work? Make sure you understand who is required to obtain these approvals.

☐ Has the builder obtained the necessary foundation data, such as a soil report and contour surveys?

☐ Does your preliminary agreement cover anything other than a soil report? Preliminary agreements are often used to obtain a soil report but some builders include costs for drawing up plans and specifications. It's important to seek advice from a building lawyer before signing such a contract.

☐ Is all work to be undertaken covered in the contract, drawings or specifications? Contracts must detail the full terms of the agreement between you and your contractor and contain a sufficient description of the work to be carried out. All plans and specifications (including fixtures, fittings and finishes) should be attached to the contract.

☐ The contract price should be prominently displayed. The contract must contain a clear warning if the contract price is unknown or if it is subject to change. An explanation of how the contract price may be varied should also be included.

☐ Ensure the deposit is within the legal limit. Your deposit should be no more than 10 per cent for work costing \$20,000 or less and five per cent for work costing more than \$20,000.

☐ Does the contract require the release of progress payments and, if so, is the payment schedule clearly outlined in the contract? In Queensland and Victoria, you must pay a specific amount for each completed stage of building. If your builder has requested different payments, ensure you get legal advice before you decide and to verify that the alternative method complies with requirements.

☐ Do you understand the procedure for variations? All variations must be in writing and should include the signature of both parties to the contract.

☐ Does the contract state when work on the home is to start and finish or the number of days required to finish? If there is no defined start date, the contract must state that the builder will do everything feasible to start work on the home as early as possible. The contract must also outline allowances made by the builder if any delays occur.

☐ The contract must contain a note about the insurance required under New South Wales' *Home Building Act 1989*, the *Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991* or the *Building Act 1993* in Victoria, as well as the implied statutory warranties in each state. In New South Wales and Victoria, builders must provide you with a certificate of insurance before receiving any money under the contract or before doing any work for more than

\$12,000. For Queensland builders, a certificate of insurance is required for domestic building work valued at more than \$3300.

☐ Are you aware of the cooling-off provisions related to the contract? In New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, building contracts are subject to a cooling-off period of five business days, starting the date you receive the signed copy of the document. The contract may be cancelled by the homeowner during this period by way of written notice. Different conditions apply in each state regarding cooling-off periods — contact the building authority in your state or territory for more information.

☐ Does the contract contain an approved checklist and a separate section with definitions of words used in the document? In New South Wales, you must also receive a copy of the *New South Wales Fair Trading Consumer Building Guide*, while Queensland builders are required to give consumers a copy of a QBCC-approved *Contract Information Statement*. Consumer Affairs Victoria produces *Building and Renovating: A Guide for Consumers*, which is available from its website.

☐ Don't forget, if a builder or tradesperson wants you to sign a contract that does not meet all of these requirements, you should not sign it. The homeowner is always entitled to a copy of the contract once it has been signed and must be provided with a copy of the contract within five business days of it being signed.

WANT MORE INFORMATION OR ADVICE ON BUILDING CONTRACTS?

Consumer Affairs Victoria aims to help Victorians to be responsible and informed businesses and consumers. To help successfully manage your building project, the regulator has put together short videos with handy tips, as well as a free model domestic building contract you can use when planning to build your new home. The contract balances the rights and obligations of consumers and builders. If a dispute arises, the contract provides a clear path to the requirements of the law.

Download your copy and watch these videos at www.consumer.vic.gov.au/housing-and-accommodation/building-and-renovating

Consumer Affairs Victoria

Phone: 1300 558 181

Website: consumer.vic.gov.au



Department of Justice

FREE digital Heatlie recipe book when you ENTER the draw to WIN an Australian-made Island Gourmet Elite barbecue



Universal Magazines is delighted to partner with barbecue extraordinaire Heatlie to present this special barbecue cookbook for subscribers and entrants into the competition to WIN an Island Gourmet Elite, valued at \$3500!

From ricotta hotcakes with grilled stone fruit to whole-baked snapper and lemongrass and chilli pork neck satay, the dishes in the Cook with Heatlie recipe book showcase the diversity and flexibility of Heatlie barbecues. We hope you have fun trying out some of the recipes created by Heatlie brand ambassador and runner-up of MasterChef Australia 2014, Laura Cassai.

We want to know your favourite BBQ recipe for summer!

To enter the draw to WIN, visit beaheatliechef.com.au



About the PRIZE:

The Australian-made Island Gourmet Elite is the ideal choice for outdoor kitchens. The stylish, stainless-steel unit can be dropped directly into any type of benchtop, including timber, laminate, granite and Caesarstone, and comes fully assembled, making installation a breeze.

Its solid-steel hotplate with optional roasting hood is ideal for cooking all types of foods, including stirfries, seafood, pizzas and traditional barbecue favourites, and the steel ribbon burners prevent charring, eliminate hot and cold spots and ensure food is cooked evenly.

Hard-wearing and easy to clean, Heatlie barbecues are available in LPG or natural gas and come with a flame-failure safety feature, which shuts off the gas if the flame goes out. The Island Gourmet Elite can also be used as a free-standing barbecue when combined with the stainless-steel cabinet.



and tell us your FAVOURITE BBQ recipe

Image credit:
G.J. Gardner (p64)



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